

Members of the Committee,

My name is Benjamin Chambers. I'm from House District 45, and I am here today to ask that you support the POWER Act.

As a constituent, I'm urging you to support HB 3546: Protecting Oregonians With Energy Responsibility (POWER) Act to ensure that families and small businesses do not have to continue subsidizing the energy costs for data centers. The POWER Act aims to address one of the root causes of unaffordable electricity bills, protecting Oregon families from carrying the energy costs of the wealthy tech industry.

Why Should Individuals and Small Businesses Pay for Data Centers that Benefit Large Corporations and a Wealthy Elite?

- I don't have to tell you that energy bills have been shooting upward. I've spent years supporting the efforts of ratepayer advocates like the Citizens Utility Board to make sure that private utilities like Pacific Power and PGE are not allowed to shift unreasonable costs to households like mine – sometimes successfully, sometimes not.
- I've learned that I can rely on one thing over the last 20+ years: private utilities and large energy users will use every trick in the book to try to shift costs of their operations and business choices (especially poor ones) onto ratepayers – those who are least able to protect themselves or even follow the intricacies of rate cases and other legal skullduggery designed to rip them off.
- Data centers are a perfect example of private businesses trying to avoid paying for services they need and require and shift those costs to homeowners and small businesses.

Subsidizing Data Centers Means Subsidizing AI – A Tool of the Uber-Wealthy to Make Themselves Even Richer.

We've been told over and over that AI is going to upend our lives and take our jobs, and that all we can do is welcome it. And yet, there's no evidence at all that AI, while useful in specific cases -- is necessary, useful for most people, or even profitable at scale. See the following posts from a long-time tech journalist Ed Zitron:

- <https://www.wheresyoured.at/power-cut/>
- <https://www.wheresyoured.at/wheres-the-money/>

But AI is one of the primary forces driving the expansion of data centers and their associated power needs. And who will profit from it? Not individual ratepayers. Not small businesses. The tech giants and private utilities stand to gain an enormous windfall. So why should we underwrite the energy bills for data centers? The suggestion is obviously laughable, and deeply unfair. HB 3546 would ensure that my neighbors and I – and small businesses -- are no longer paying for any utility investments that are only benefiting large energy users like data centers.

I Don't Need a Data Center to Turn on My Lights, My Stove, My Furnace, or my Refrigerator – Why Am I Paying for Data Centers Too?

Large energy users need to pay their fair share. With data center demand growing exponentially, we need better guardrails to protect Oregonians from the rising energy costs data centers bring with them. HB 3546 would create a new customer category for data centers and

similar businesses so they can be held accountable by regulators, and Oregon families can be released from this unfair arrangement.

Oregon needs to protect our energy systems and affordability. HB 3546 would require data centers to commit to making utility investments worth it so our utilities can keep our lights on, as well as support businesses coming to Oregon.

The POWER Act protects our energy bills, holds data centers accountable, and makes our entire utility system stronger. Please vote yes on HB 3546.

__Benjamin Chambers_____(Signature/ printed name)