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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Datacenter legislation deserves our support

Many Georgians are concerned about rapidly spreading proposals for building datacenters and their impacts around the state. In fact, Georgia is now considered one of the nation's most vulnerable states exposed to this trend.

Datacenters are warehouse-sized buildings containing the circuitry needed to support massive information storage and processing demands of internet use, social networking, and artificial intelligence. They require enormous amounts of energy and water. One average-sized datacenter uses the electricity of about 200,000 homes, and last year they used 17.4 billion gallons of water for cooling. Increased construction of datacenters imposes serious threats to Georgia's natural resources, infrastructure, and utility costs.

To help protect Georgia communities from these and other threats of major development projects, state legislation has been proposed to ensure that relevant information about them is fully disclosed prior to decisions approving such ventures. The purpose of this bill is to ensure transparency regarding the resource consumption and related consequences of ventures operating within the state.

This legislation, Senate Bill 421 [SB421], known as "The Data Center Transparency Act," amends existing Georgia law to prohibit local governments, authorities, and others from entering into agreements that keep information about a project's electricity or water usage secret. This means that any contract restricting the disclosure of electricity or water demands of a company, including datacenters, will be legally invalid.

Center for a Sustainable Coast strongly advises Georgians to contact their state legislators urging support for SB421. Names of legislators and relevant information about SB421 are available online at <https://protectgeorgia.org/#/457>.

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