



2026.29

Resolution In Support Of High-Road Standards for Data Center Development in Washington State

WHEREAS, data centers are the physical foundation for the internet and the digital economy. Since data centers store, process and transmit our personal information, keeping data centers in the United States is key to protecting Washingtonians' data privacy and our Country's broader national security; and,

WHEREAS, these facilities represent billions of dollars in private investment and create opportunities for thousands of family-wage construction jobs, long-term operations and maintenance careers, and expanded registered apprenticeship opportunities; and,

WHEREAS, data centers also place significant demands on electrical infrastructure, water resources, local government services, and surrounding communities, raising legitimate concerns regarding affordability, environmental stewardship, transparency, and equitable community benefit; and,

WHEREAS, working people should not be forced to choose between economic opportunity and responsible stewardship of public resources; and,

WHEREAS, the labor movement believes that economic development succeeds when workers, communities, and industry work together to establish clear expectations that protect the public interest while creating pathways to good union jobs; and,

WHEREAS, projects receiving public incentives or relying upon public infrastructure should deliver measurable public value through good jobs, workforce development, community investment, and responsible resource management; and,

WHEREAS, Washington has an opportunity to become a national leader by demonstrating that data center development can strengthen local communities, protect ratepayers, and expand economic opportunity while upholding the highest labor standards; now therefore be it,

RESOLVED, that the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO (WSLC) supports responsible data center development that creates lasting benefits for workers, families, and communities; and be it further,

RESOLVED, that the WSLC supports policies requiring data center projects to:

- Utilize Project Labor Agreements or equivalent high-road labor standards whenever appropriate;
- Pay prevailing wages and prioritize responsible contractors with strong records of worker safety, legal compliance, and workforce development;
- Invest in state and federally registered apprenticeship programs to expand pathways into the building and construction trades and long-term technical careers;
- Respect workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively across all phases of construction, operations, maintenance, and related industries;
- Ensure that permanent operations and maintenance jobs are family-supporting jobs with strong wages, benefits, and career advancement opportunities; and be it further,

RESOLVED, that the WSLC supports policies ensuring that data center development protects Washington communities by:

- Preventing the shifting of electricity or infrastructure costs onto residential customers and small businesses;
- Requiring transparency regarding anticipated energy demand, water use, environmental impacts, and community benefits;
- Requiring technologies that reduce resource consumption whenever feasible, such as recycled water, closed loop cooling systems, or air cooled systems;
- Encouraging the use of renewable or non-emitting energy whenever possible
- Supporting investments in electric generation, transmission, and grid modernization necessary to serve new industrial demand while maintaining reliability and affordability for existing customers;
- Providing meaningful opportunities for public participation and local community engagement before project approval;
- Advocating for a surcharge tied to local community weatherization; and be it further,

RESOLVED, that the WSLC supports ensuring public investments produce public benefits by:

- Requiring data center operators who receive any state or local tax incentives or expedited permitting to disclose their progress on the goals of this resolution;
- Ensuring local governments, schools, and public services receive fair economic benefit from data center development;
- Promoting policies that strengthen local supply chains, domestic manufacturing, and union labor throughout the construction and operation of these facilities;
- Promoting tax incentives tied to energy efficiency upgrades
- Promoting the expansion of construction incentives statewide; and be it finally,

RESOLVED, that the WSLC will advocate for state policies that ensure the growth of Washington's digital infrastructure advances the interests of working people by creating good union jobs, protecting ratepayers, safeguarding natural resources, strengthening local communities, and ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are shared broadly rather than concentrated among a few corporate interests.