United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 17, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Jennifer Granholm
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20585

The Honorable Michael S. Regan
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Jeffrey Zients
Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Jake Sullivan
National Security Advisor
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

John Podesta
Senior Advisor to the President for Clean
Energy Innovation and Implementation
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Ali Zaidi
National Climate Advisor
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden, Secretary Granholm, Administrator Regan, Mr. Zients, Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Podesta, and Mr. Zaidi,

We write to express our concern with reports that the administration is considering fast-tracking the construction of data centers to power artificial intelligence (AI).[1] We have supported significant, bipartisan steps to maintain U.S. leadership in AI and bolster our national security. At the same time, data centers are already dramatically increasing load on the grid. This increased demand has already led to higher energy costs for ratepayers and higher emissions, underscoring the need to thoughtfully match this load with abundant and affordable clean energy. As your administration considers how to support this technology, we urge you to uphold critical clean air and water standards and ensure that the energy needs of technology companies are not prioritized over the needs of households.

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[1] Jordan Wolman and Mohar Chatterjee, "White House weighing executive action to spur data centers," E&E News, December 12, 2024, https://www.eenews.net/articles/white-house-weighing-executive-action-to-spur-data-centers/.

We support maintaining U.S. leadership in next-generation technologies and advancing innovation while also looking out for individual ratepayers and the environment. Over the past three years, Congress has invested in clean and affordable energy through the *Inflation Reduction Act*, *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*, and *CHIPS and Science Act*, which are already accelerating decarbonization while reshoring clean energy manufacturing from China and other countries.
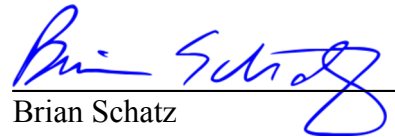
Some of the world's largest companies are leading the buildout of data centers and have demonstrated their ability to bring new clean energy onto the grid.[2] We should not relieve them of that responsibility while passing higher energy costs on to working families who are already struggling to make ends meet.[3] Moreover, we would be concerned if these opportunities were limited to large, vertically integrated AI companies, which could harm the capacity of smaller firms to compete and innovate.

We urge you to reconsider any potential executive action that could lead to increased pollution and costs for consumers. We are the United States of America; there is no doubt that we can win the AI race while accelerating our decarbonization efforts.
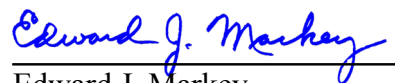
Sincerely,

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

Brian Schatz
United States Senator

Peter Welch
United States Senator

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

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[2] Akshat Kasliwal, Jesse Gilbert, and Anirudh Mathur, "Big Tech is upending the clean energy landscape," *Utility Dive*, October 7, 2024. https://www.utilitydive.com/news/big-tech-amazon-google-microsoft-meta-upending-clean-energy-landscape-renewables-nuclear/729082/

[3] Evan Halper and Caroline O'Donovan, "As data centers for AI strain the power grid, bills rise for everyday customers," *The Washington Post*, November 1, 2024, https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2024/11/01/ai-data-centers-electricity-bills-google-amazon/.