



February 20, 2026

Montgomery County Council
Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Council President Fani-González and members of the County Council:

My name is Mark Clements and I am the Maryland Policy Manager for [Greater Greater Washington](#), a nonprofit promoting better land use and transportation policies throughout Greater Washington. We are writing in support of ZTA 26-01, which would place reasonable and necessary restrictions on data center development in Montgomery County.

As noted by Montgomery Planning, [there are currently four data centers operating in the county](#) that are presently in CR or mixed use zones. Even the largest of these four (the 10-acre Prosperity Drive site) is practically Lilliputian in comparison to the national average, [which stands at 224 acres](#). Future data centers are likely to have a much larger footprint that would make them wholly inappropriate for the zoning classifications those existing facilities were approved for. We are in agreement that industrial use zones are the only appropriate places to site data centers, and that even those uses must be conditional.

Many nearby jurisdictions, including [Frederick](#) and [Prince George's counties](#), have reconsidered their initial decisions to permit data centers by right as their impacts on land use and resource consumption are better understood. With buildable land at such a premium in Montgomery County, it would be irresponsible to site such facilities in areas where housing, retail, or other facilities of public benefit could be going instead. The [significant energy costs](#) will burden consumers across the region, as Montgomery County residents are even currently absorbing the expenses of data centers built in Virginia.

We understand that data centers are a necessity in our interconnected world, and that they may confer certain economic benefits to localities that host them. However, neither of these things are more important than the daily welfare of county residents. To respect that balance, we urge the Council to pass ZTA 26-01 and to continue to monitor data center development in Montgomery County with maximum vigilance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Clements', with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mark Clements
Maryland Policy Manager

The Washington, DC region is great  and it can be greater.