



OHIO TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION

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House Bill 646, Data Study Commission Senate Energy Committee Proponent Testimony June 9, 2026

Chair Chavez, Vice Chair Landis, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Senate Energy Committee, my name is Kyle Brooks, and I am the Executive Director for the Ohio Township Association. On behalf of Ohio's 1,308 townships, thank you for the opportunity to provide written interested party testimony on House Bill 646 Data Center Study Commission.

HB 646 creates a Data Center Study Commission and directs it to study the impacts of data centers in Ohio, including environmental impacts, effects on the electrical grid, water usage and local water supply, impact on farmland, and other relevant topics associated with data center construction and operations. The OTA supports the creation of this commission and believes their report is important not only for townships, but for the entire state. The OTA also supports the appointment of a township representative on the study commission that is included in the current version of the bill.

Data-centers are already here operating across Ohio, and more projects continue to be proposed. As this industry continues to grow, it is critical that the state and local subdivisions understand the long-term impacts these facilities have on local communities, infrastructure, public services, the economy and more, good and bad.

Townships are the location where many large-scale data centers projects are being proposed and constructed. Unlike municipalities, townships often have the amount of available land necessary to support these projects. Modern data centers require an average of 250 acres and in certain cases, requiring thousands of acres of contiguous land. In Ohio, that scale of undeveloped land is most often found in townships.

Because of this, townships and their residents are frequently the first to experience the impacts of data center development. These impacts go beyond zoning and land use decisions. The construction of a data center places significant strain on township roadways due to the volume and weight of construction traffic. After construction is complete, townships will be responsible for providing fire protection, EMS service, and other public safety responses to these facilities. This responsibility is especially important because data centers operate continuously and cannot simply be taken offline during an emergency. Furthermore, fire protection in townships is funded through property tax levies, and with the scale of these projects, asking township residents to pass additional levies may be necessary.

Data centers also raise important questions about water usage, and electrical demand, and infrastructure capacity. Many rural townships rely on well systems, and the addition of a

large-scale data center can have a significant effect on those resources. In addition, the electrical demand created by data centers can increase transmission costs and place additional strain on current customers. These are real issues that township officials are already facing and will continue to face as more projects are proposed across the state.

Ohio currently has nearly 200 data centers, one of the highest totals in the nation, and significantly more than neighboring states. As Ohio continues to attract these facilities, it is important to recognize that township governments are the ones dealing with the day-to-day impacts on residents, infrastructure, and safety services.

Thank you for considering our position. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 614-863-0045.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Kyle A. Brooks". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kyle" and last name "Brooks" clearly legible.

Kyle A. Brooks
Executive Director