



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Representative Stroud Introduces Legislation to Hold Data Centers Accountable

Ashland, Wis — Representative Stroud (D-Ashland) announced the introduction of LRB-5440/1, legislation to create Wisconsin's first statewide standards for the development of data centers. The bill aims to ensure that as these large-scale projects expand, they strengthen Wisconsin's economy while protecting workers, communities, and natural resources.

The bill would:

- Require public reporting of data centers' energy and water use
- Protect local water resources and ensure early notice of high-demand projects
- Guarantee that large projects pay prevailing wages or higher under collective bargaining agreements
- Require data centers to meet green building standards
- Direct large data centers to derive at least 70% of their electricity from renewable sources to be eligible for sales and use tax exemptions from WEDC
- Invest in Wisconsin's public benefits and clean energy innovation funds through an annual fee
- Require that utilities offer a renewable energy tariff allowing businesses to source their power from new renewable energy projects without raising rates for other customers

According to Representative Stroud, this critical legislation is needed to ensure that the public is protected in light of an accelerating industry. "We all use technology that is necessitating the rapid scaling up of data centers, and Wisconsin has become a location of interest for these projects. Rather than allowing data centers to operate unchecked, we should be creating a regulatory environment that leverages this opportunity for the benefit of the public." Stroud cited examples of public benefit that include contributions to expanding our renewable energy capacity and commitments to paying strong, family-supporting wages to the people who will build these projects. Stroud said that older data center designs relied on excessive water use, but newer designs are less water-intensive.

For Stroud, the larger issue is energy use: "Utility rates are already too high for customers, and we have to ensure that data centers don't contribute to those rates increasing further. With the right regulatory environment, we can protect the public and take advantage of this moment to help restructure our energy grid in a way that will help bring down costs for customers as we build out renewables."

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Representative Angela Stroud was elected in 2024 and represents the 73rd Assembly District. Rep. Stroud currently serves on the Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities, and Sporting Heritage