



309 East 11th St., Suite 2 • Austin, Texas 78701 • 512.477.1155 • www.citizen.org

June 9, 2026

Hello task force members. My name is Kamil Cook, I work as an organizer for Public Citizen here in Austin, and I'm a member of the Resource Management Commission.

For the last 8 or so months, I've been supporting communities around Texas who have been fighting to protect themselves from resource hungry data center developers. This has led to a huge community pushback, the likes of which I haven't seen in the last three years that I've been working in this field. There are people who have never thought about what it means to rile up a crowd to march to city council or their county commissioner's meeting or people in deeply conservative parts of the state who are threatening to switch party allegiance because those in power are allowing these developers to do what they want.

These data centers are coming to Texas in droves because of our cheap land, cheap electricity, and weak regulations. The planning regulations that are before y'all today aim to correct one the weak regulation that brings these companies here in an effort to protect our finite resources and to ensure that our city can continue to grow and support the people whom inhabit it.

This is more important than ever. On the electricity side of things, which I'm much more familiar with than water, ERCOT predicts that electricity demand is projected to grow 4-fold through 2030, with 80% of that coming from data centers. To be clear, not all of this will be built and I understand that there don't seem to be data centers coming to Austin proper today, but whatever comes will create a massive strain on our resources and water. These concerns need to be included in future economic development frameworks for new developments.

Even if that power demand doesn't come from here, we have gas plants here that take lots of water. And we have existing industries that want to take more and more water and there is no existing mechanism in place even ask large and high volume water users how much water they expect to take in the future. This should be implemented. And extensive reclaimed water programs should be implemented as well.

Another recommendation that we support would be expanding board, commission, and city council approval of service extension requests in the desired development zone to customers who Austin Water identifies as potentially using more than a minimum of water. This will ensure that the people of Austin and our city have oversight over large commercial and industrial users that are coming to our city.

These are common sense regulations that will help our city and our water utility better understand and plan for our future. I encourage y'all to approve this recommendation.

Thank you.