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Data Centers are Straining the Grid. Can they be Forced to Pay for It?

As backlash grows, a nationwide search is underway for solutions to the AI energy crunch.

Last month, President Trump sat alongside executives of the largest tech companies in the country as they pledged to pay a fair share of the energy costs of their data center buildout. “Data centers ... they need some PR help,” Trump said at the gathering. “People think that if the data center goes in, their electricity is going to go up.”

It’s not an entirely unfounded assumption.

As the tech industry has funneled billions of dollars into the AI boom over the last several years, it has simultaneously been expanding its fleet of computing powerhouses, which require vast amounts of energy to run. These facilities have been cropping up all over the country, from rural communities in eastern Pennsylvania to the cities of northern Utah.

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Route Fifty

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