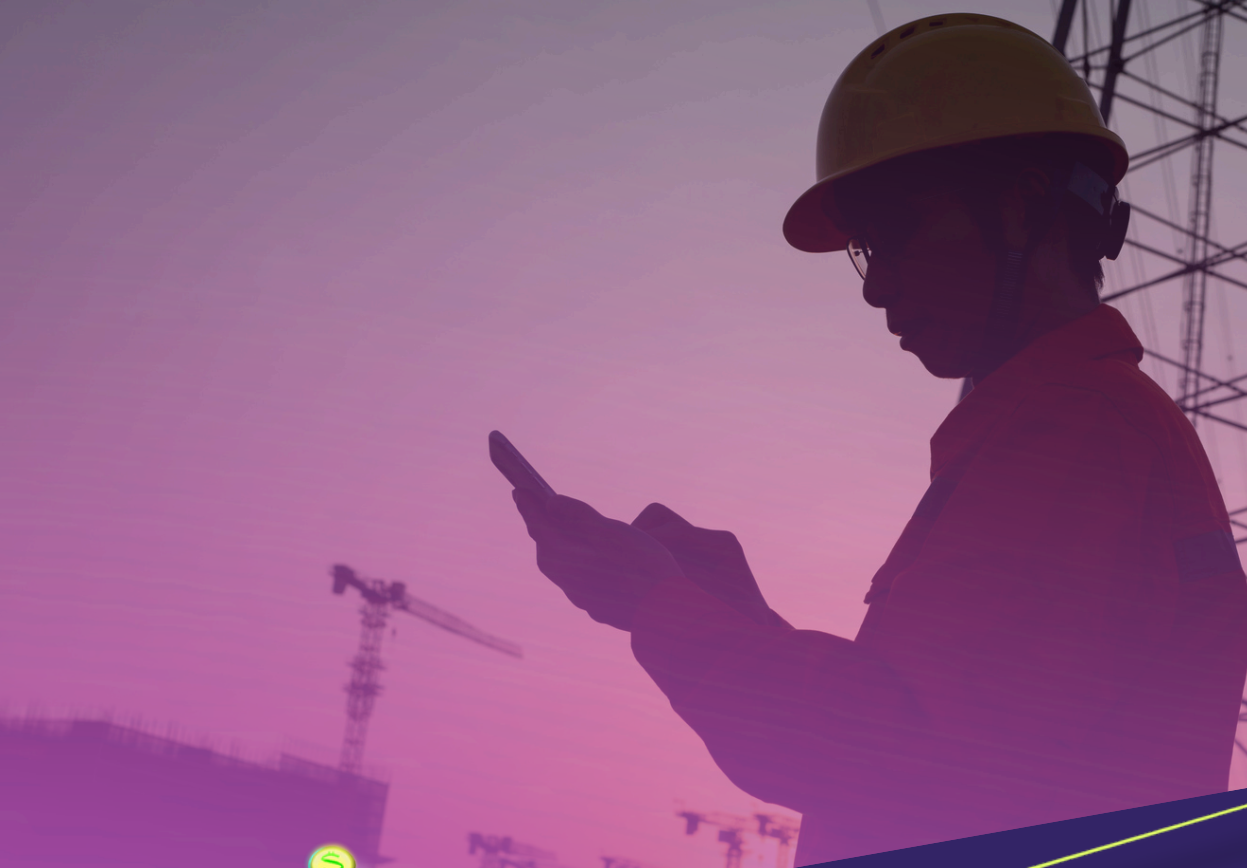


Big Tech's and Big Utility's Money Moves To Fast Track Data Centers



**A TECH MONEY
IN POLITICS
CASE STUDY**

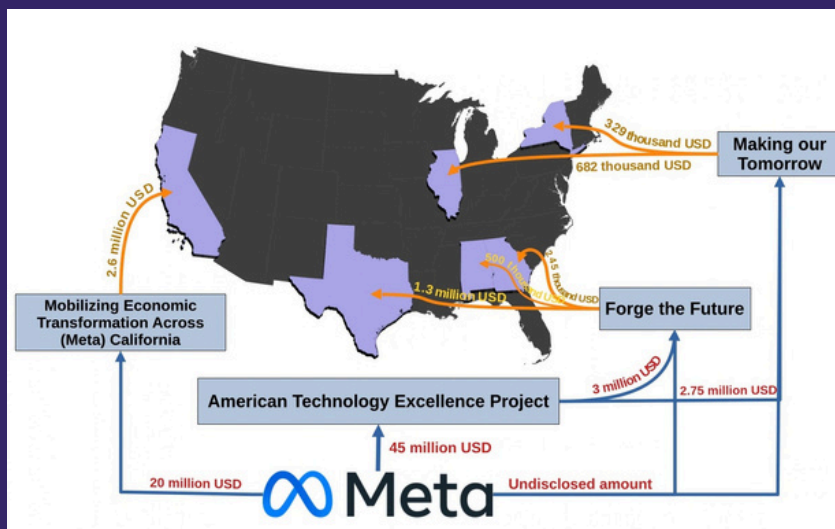
TABLE OF CONTENTS

»» Table of Contents		1
»» Case Study: Georgia		2
»» Case Study: Louisiana		7
»» Case Study: Arizona		12
»» Sources		16
»» Acknowledgements		18

CASE STUDY: GEORGIA

Big Tech has been influencing Georgia's state politics around data center development in two ways:

1 META'S STATE PAC: FORGE THE FUTURE



Meta State-Level PACs

Meta spends **more** than any of its tech rivals at the state level. Meta runs a nonfederal multi-state PAC, called the **American Technology Excellence Project**, or **ATEP**, which subsequently funds state PACs such as Making Our Tomorrow, backing Democrats and Forge the Future, backing Republicans.

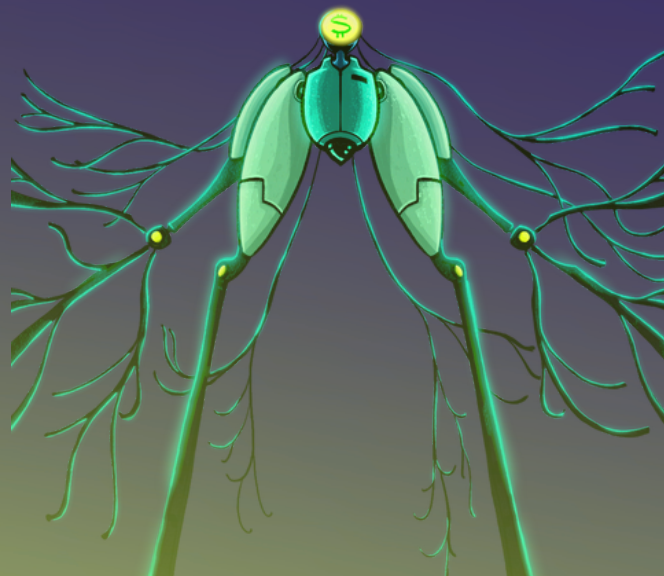
Organized under Section 527 of the Internal Revenue Code, ATEP is able to **bypass federal and local transparency laws** requiring PACs to disclose their donations and expenditures. The Meta state PAC supported six Republican candidates in Georgia state primaries, all of which advanced to the general election.

CASE STUDY: GEORGIA

1

META'S STATE PAC: FORGE THE FUTURE

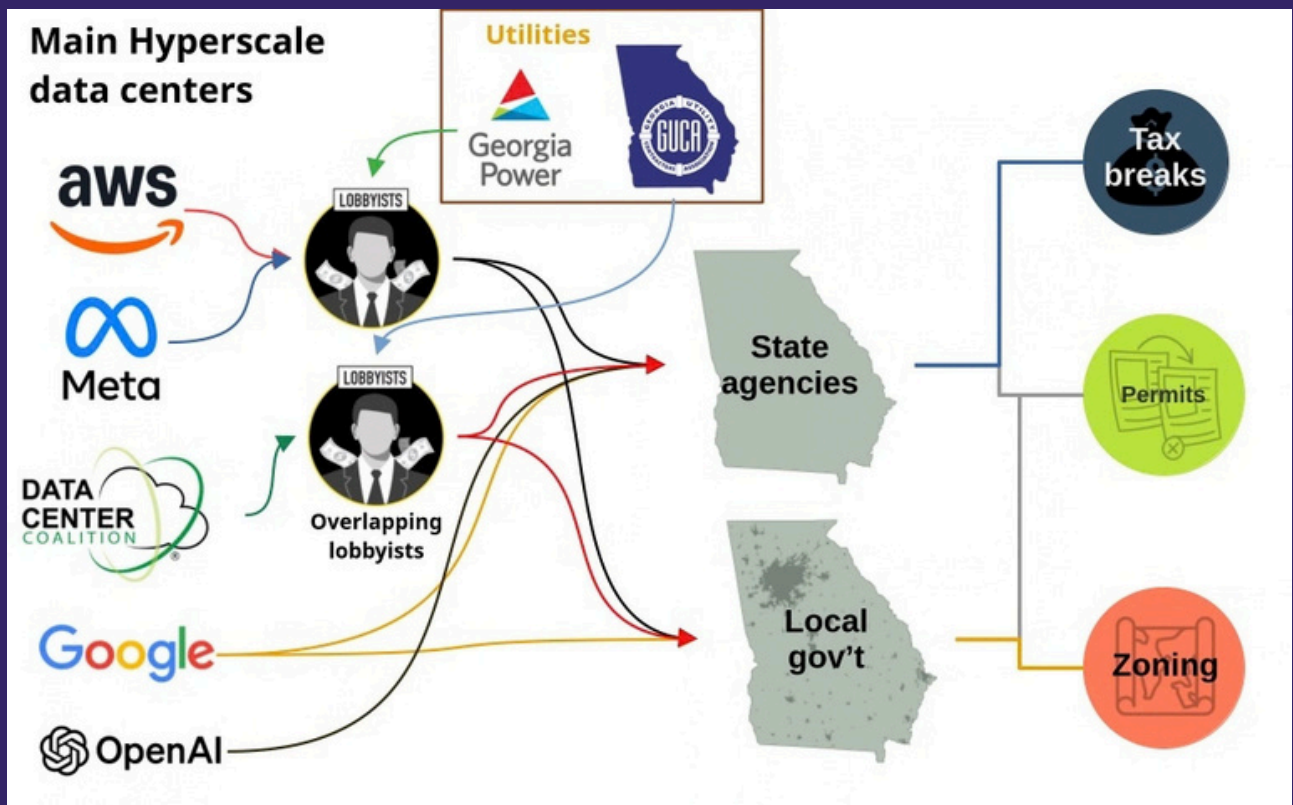
Meta gave an undisclosed amount to **BroBrot Todd Jones** for the primary election. State representative Jones is Vice Chair of the House Science & Technology Committee, making him a strategic candidate for Meta. Jones is also the chairman of Talitrix, a company that provides GPS and electronic monitoring equipment and software to government agencies such as law enforcement, courts, probation, or corrections.



CASE STUDY: GEORGIA

2

LOBBYING AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVEL



Lobbying by Hyperscale Data Center Developers in Georgia (2025-26)

In Georgia, hyperscale data center companies have conducted lobbying at the state level, and have pushed for tax breaks, permits, and re-zoning.

CASE STUDY: GEORGIA



At the local level, **zoning ordinances have been updated to accommodate the industry.** Effingham County's zoning code was updated to explicitly list data centers among permitted industrial use. This happened right before OpenAI's \$20 billion campus project near Rincon was announced. OpenAI's hyperscale data center was approved in secrecy, behind NDA's, without community input.

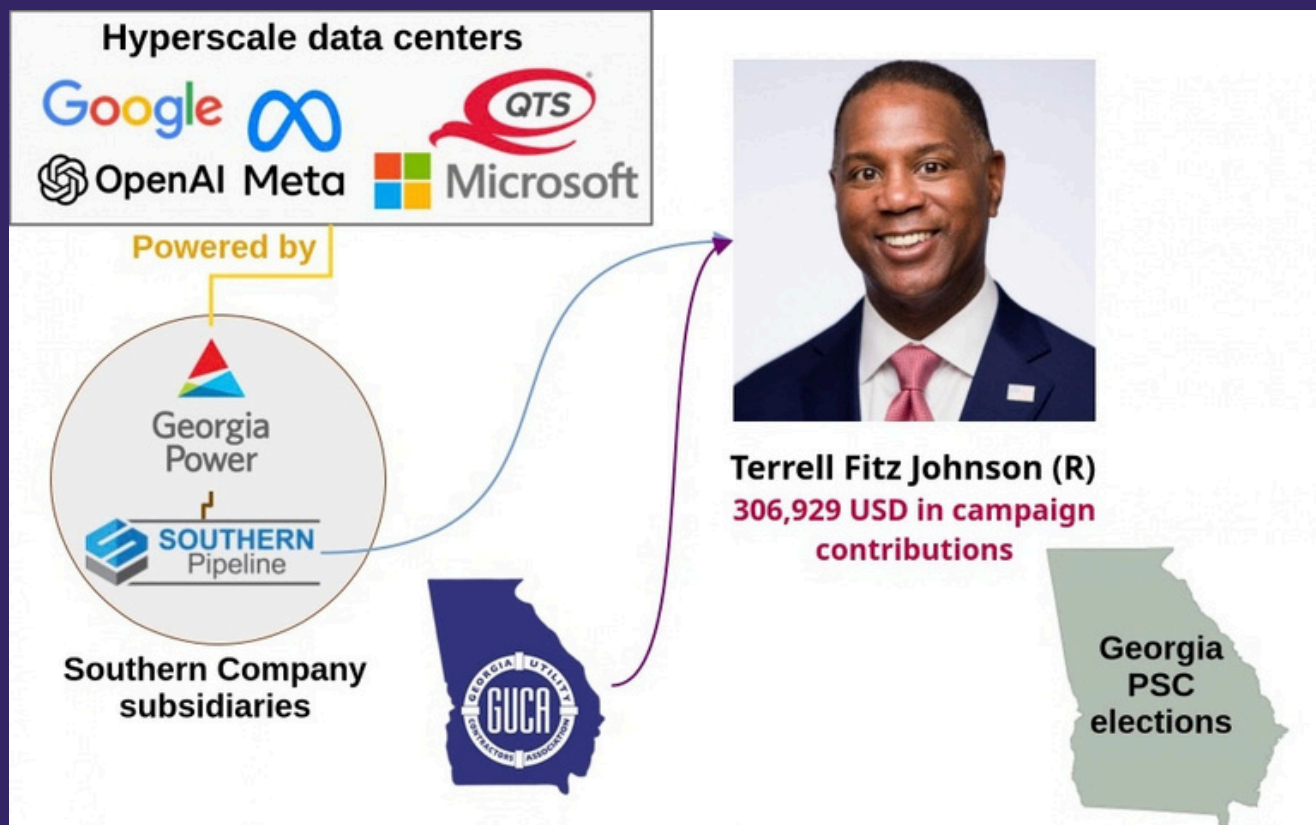
The Data Center Coalition, an industry association representing Amazon, Google, and Microsoft, hired two lobbyists at Georgia's state capitol, who testified against a bill aimed at regulating data center facilities in Georgia.

The Data Center Coalition, along with Amazon Web Services, and Meta, all share lobbyists with Georgia Power. So hyperscale data center companies and the utility companies that power them are working together to get tax breaks, permits, and industry friendly re-zoning.

Fitz Johnson is the Republican candidate running for election to the Georgia Public Service Commission to represent District 3. Almost 70 percent of his campaign contributions of \$500 or more have been from people and entities tied to the companies the commission regulates. This of course includes Georgia Power, which has agreements with Google, OpenAI, Meta, and Microsoft, for powering their hyperscale data centers in the state.

CASE STUDY: GEORGIA

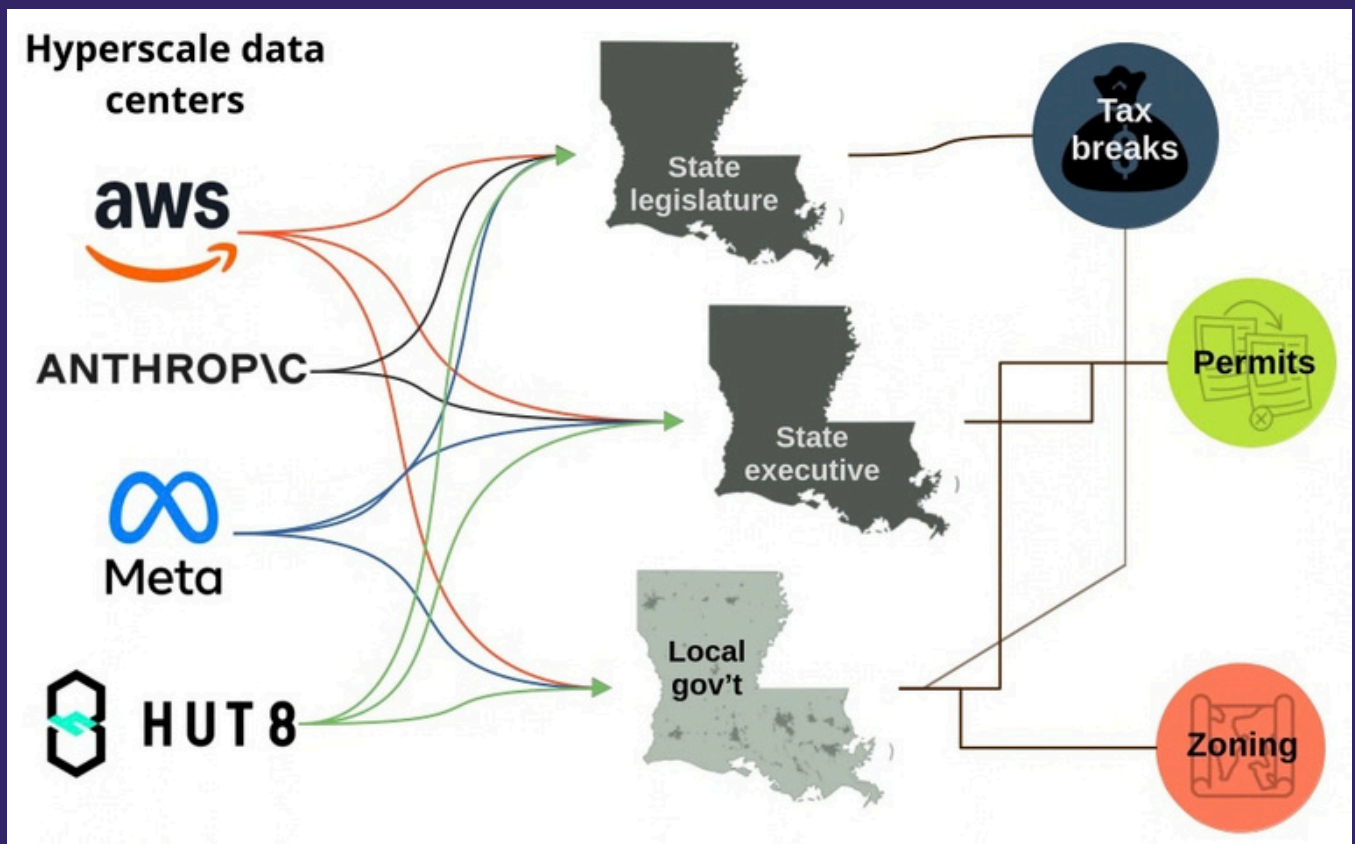
PSC Campaign Contributions From Utility Companies Associated with Hyperscale Data Centers in Georgia (2026)



So Fitz Johnson is the BroBrot to look for on the ballot in November in Georgia. Johnson is a former District 3 Georgia Public Service Commissioner — he held the position for four years from 2021 to 2025. In that time, he voted to approve Georgia Power's plan to spend tens of billions of dollars on **new power plants primarily to serve data centers**. He also voted for all six Georgia Power rate increases.

CASE STUDY: LOUISIANA

Lobbying by Hyperscale Data Centers in Louisiana (2025-26)



All major companies developing hyperscale data centers in Louisiana conducted lobbying in the state. The result has been tax breaks, re-zoning of rural lands to industrial use, and the granting of permits.

CASE STUDY: LOUISIANA

Union of
Concerned Scientists

ClimateEnergyTransportationFoodNuclear WeaponsScience & Democracy

ABOUT / NEWS

Louisiana Regulators Fast-Track Proposal Tripling Number of Gas Plants to Power Massive Meta Data Center

Published Apr 15, 2026



New Orleans Public Radio





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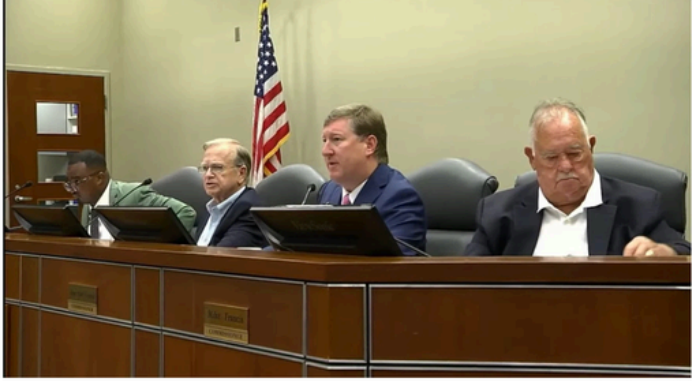
Politics

Louisiana PSC kills ruling that would force Meta to turn over key data center information

WWNO - New Orleans Public Radio | By [Michael McEwen](#)
Published August 12, 2026 at 8:16 PM CDT



 LISTEN • 1:17



Michael McEwen / WWNO

Louisiana Public Service Commissioners D-Davante Lewis (left), R-Eric Skrimetta, R-Jean-Paul Coussan and R-Mike Francis (right) listen to witness testimony regarding Meta's large data centers in Richland Parish on August 12, 2026.



Louisiana PSC approves fast-tracking \$21B Entergy proposal tied to Meta data center



PSC APPROVES TO SPEED UP ENTERGY \$21B PLAN

LOUISIANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION MEETING

5:13 80°

With a 4 to 1 vote, the Louisiana Public Service Commission approved an accelerated timeline for Entergy to seek approval for seven new gas plants and billions

By [Anissa Carby](#)
Published: Apr. 15, 2026 at 3:26 PM PDT

CASE STUDY: LOUISIANA

Spotlight

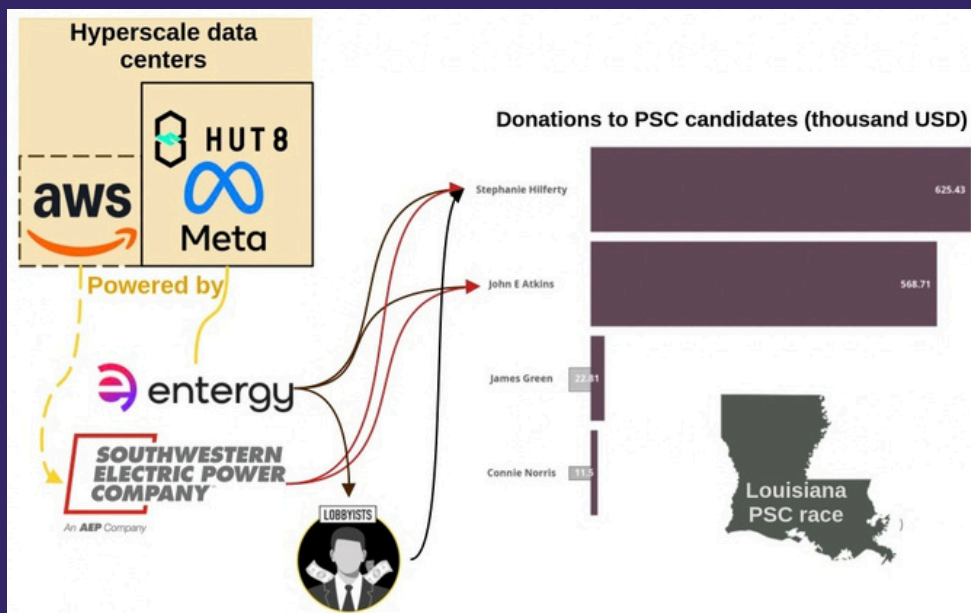
Meta's \$50 billion Hyperion data center in Louisiana

- Meta **secured the incentives** for its Hyperion data center in Louisiana, **through a fast-tracked legislative process**. Meta **explicitly conditioned the project** on receiving a **sales tax exemption** on the billions it would spend on servers and equipment.
- Louisiana's Act 730 grants up to 30 years of sales and use tax rebates on data center construction, server equipment, and coolant systems. This means Meta is projected to **extract up to \$3.6 billion in sales tax exemptions** in the first decade alone.
- The Louisiana Public Service Commission has approved a total of 10 gas plants to power Meta's massive data center in Richland Parish. The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) found that Louisiana's electricity system **costs could increase by \$26 billion over the next 15 years**, solely due to high data center growth.

CASE STUDY: LOUISIANA

In November, Louisiana is holding an election for two of five seats on the Louisiana Public Service Commission. Even though Big Tech did not directly contribute to PSC campaigns, both utility companies that have major data-center power purchase agreements - Entergy and Southwestern Electric Power Company - provided money to the campaigns of Republicans Stephanie Hilferty and John Atkins.

PSC Campaign Contributions From Utility Companies Associated with Hyperscale Data Centers in Louisiana (2026)



As of May 2026, Atkins reported nearly 28 percent, or over \$141,000 of his contributions from businesses or entities associated with PSC-regulated entities, including utility executives and the oil and gas industry.

CASE STUDY: LOUISIANA



Utility-linked donors back candidates for Louisiana's utility seats



By Victoria Freire and Krysti Shallenberger
May 13, 2026



Hilferty received **50 percent** of her campaign contributions from individuals that the Louisiana Public Service Commission is supposed to regulate or people associated with them, like utility lawyers and lobbying firms whose clients include oil and gas companies and utilities.



CASE STUDY: ARIZONA



Big Tech's Arizona Lobbying

- In Arizona, major hyperscale developers have lobbied at both the state and local levels, engaging a mix of former elected officials and industry-aligned representatives to advance favorable tax policy, zoning changes, and permitting.
- The national Data Center Coalition is represented in the state by Arizona-based lobbyist Russell Smoldon, who has described energy access as the industry's biggest "choke point."
- Arizona has become one of the top data center markets in the country, nearing 100 facilities statewide.

CASE STUDY: ARIZONA

The ACC

The Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) is a five-member elected body that functions as the state's public service commission. So the ACC regulates investor-owned utilities like Arizona Public Service and Tucson Electric Power, and holds the power to approve the infrastructure deals that connect data centers to the grid.

ACC Campaign Contributions From Utility Companies Associated with Hyperscale Data Centers in Arizona (2026)



CASE STUDY: ARIZONA

ACC Facts

- The ACC voted 4-1 to allow Tucson Electric Power to power Beale Infrastructure's "Project Blue" data center in Tucson despite massive public opposition.
- The commissioners who approved that deal are themselves the beneficiaries of significant utility industry money. Since 2021, ACC Chair Kevin Thompson and Vice Chair Nick Myers have accepted **a combined 212 donations** from people with direct ties to regulated utility companies, lobbying firms, and energy industry groups. This includes employees of NextEra, which powers Google's data center in Mesa, Arizona.
- ACC's own code of ethics prohibits commissioners from accepting donations from regulated public service corporations or registered lobbyists and requires them to return such funds or recuse themselves from related decisions.

CASE STUDY: ARIZONA

So, the BroBrot to watch out for in Arizona's general election for Arizona Corporation Commission on November 3rd is Kevin Thompson. Thompson works as an independent consultant for clients, including data centers.





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