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CLEAN ECONOMY COALITION OF WISCONSIN STATEMENT ON INTRODUCTION OF NEW DATA CENTER LEGISLATION

MILWAUKEE – The Clean Economy Coalition of Wisconsin released the following statement on the introduction of [AB 840](#):

We agree with one core premise of this legislation: without careful planning, data center development poses significant risks to Wisconsinites' pocketbooks, our state's energy reliability, and the environment.

However, we strongly disagree with the provision attacking renewable energy development – a proposal that would sharply raise electricity prices in Wisconsin and increase already unaffordable bills for many customers while undermining our state's clean energy transition. Restricting where renewable energy projects can be built in service of these facilities will ultimately drive up costs¹, increase reliance on fossil fuels that are proven to contribute to increased illnesses and climate change, and slow our transition to cheaper, safer clean energy.

This bill unfairly attacks clean energy, while failing to address how Wisconsin will meet the huge increase in energy demand from data centers and the long-term cost, health, and climate impacts of those decisions. Renewables are a key part of the solution to keep costs affordable for consumers and will keep us on track to meet our clean energy goals.

While this legislation takes an important step to address large-scale energy use, data centers must pay the *full* cost for electricity and infrastructure. Data centers enjoying tax breaks in Wisconsin must not pass additional costs on to families and small businesses. This should include requirements to pay for any necessary transmission lines and system upgrades as well. Without these protections, massive long-term costs will fall on the shoulders of Wisconsin families and small businesses – especially if data center operators cease operations before paying for the full cost of these assets.

¹ <https://gridlab.org/portfolio-item/large-loads-and-natural-gas-price-risk/>

Ultimately, everyday Wisconsinites must be protected from the unprecedented speed and scale of data center growth happening across our state – and the rising energy costs that could follow. We urge lawmakers to change this bill to prioritize protecting family pocketbooks and advance affordable, reliable clean energy solutions.

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ABOUT THE CLEAN ECONOMY COALITION OF WISCONSIN

The Clean Economy Coalition of Wisconsin is a group of climate, energy, environmental justice and conservation organizations, businesses and allies. The Coalition leverages the combined strength of its members to enhance the quality of life for all Wisconsinites by accelerating the state's transformation to a clean energy economy. We believe that an economy-wide approach to decarbonization will take our state further, faster – with better outcomes for us all. We champion equity-first policies that create jobs for Wisconsin workers, build healthier communities and protect our natural resources. By working together, we advocate for clean energy solutions that work for all of Wisconsin's diverse cultures, communities and geographies. Learn more at www.cleaneconomywi.com.