

HB-7331
PUC
Neutral



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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Public Utilities Commission

Chairman Ronald T. Gerwatowski
Commissioner Abigail Anthony
Commissioner Karen M. Bradbury

April 7, 2026

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.
Chair, House Committee on Corporations
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: House Bill 7331 – Data Centers

Dear Chair Solomon:

I am submitting the following comments on behalf of the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) on House Bill 7331 – Data Centers. This bill has three components, including cost allocation, siting, and water resources. The PUC appreciates the General Assembly's attention to the potential impacts of large data center development on electric and water systems. As drafted, the bill raises several technical and implementation questions related to tariff design, cost allocation, siting authority, and water planning that may benefit from additional review.

With respect to the cost allocation section, the language could result in complex and burdensome solutions that are unnecessary to achieve the intended cost allocation. Additional discussion would be helpful to understand other areas where the PUC reads a potential internal inconsistency.

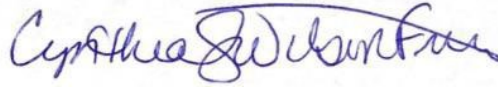
With respect to the siting board provisions, these provisions may also overlap with or unintentionally narrow the Siting Board authority that already exist in statute.

Finally, while requiring a water plan, the PUC notes that there is no commensurate requirement for water suppliers to develop a data center rate. While rate design for regulated water suppliers currently falls within the jurisdiction of the PUC, if there are specific considerations the legislature intends to address regarding water rates (regulated and unregulated), those could be included.

We look forward to working with the sponsor to refine the language for clarity and consistency to meet the goals in the most efficient manner.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at 401-780-2147 or cynthia.wilsonfrias@puc.ri.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cynthia G. Wilson-Frias". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cynthia" being the most prominent.

Cynthia G. Wilson-Frias
Chief of Legal Services

cc: Speaker Pro Temp Kennedy