



BIOETHICS.TECH

THE FOUNDATION FOR BIOETHICS IN TECHNOLOGY

The Foundation for Bioethics in Technology

Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 7695

May 7, 2026

To the Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee,

RE: Opposition to House Bill 7695 – Qualified Data Center Tax Exemptions

The Foundation for Bioethics in Technology respectfully submits this testimony in opposition to House Bill 7695, which would establish sweeping tax exemptions for qualified data centers in Rhode Island for up to thirty years.

The Foundation is a Rhode Island-based nonprofit organization focused on ethical governance, public informed consent, and the long-term societal impacts of emerging technologies and infrastructure systems.

Rhode Islanders should not be placed in a position where critical infrastructure decisions are effectively finalized through tax policy before broader environmental, biological, infrastructure, and ethical questions are resolved.

Data centers are among the most energy-intensive industrial facilities in the modern economy. These operations require continuous electricity consumption, extensive cooling systems, backup generation infrastructure, battery systems, substations, fuel storage, and significant quantities of clean freshwater. These burdens ultimately affect both the surrounding biological environment and the people living within it.

At a time when Rhode Islanders are already struggling with rising electricity costs and increasing infrastructure strain, the General Assembly should carefully evaluate whether public subsidies of this magnitude are appropriately directed toward industries widely recognized for intensive resource consumption and environmental loading.

If Rhode Island intends to offer incentives at this scale, priority should first be given to projects that measurably strengthen the resilience of the state's electrical grid, water systems, environmental remediation capacity, and public infrastructure for Rhode Islanders themselves.

Freshwater allocation must also be addressed honestly and directly.

Rhode Island may be known as the Ocean State, but saltwater does not replace the clean freshwater resources necessary for drinking water systems, ecological stability, agriculture, emergency resilience, or most industrial cooling operations associated with hyperscale computational infrastructure.

Rhode Island has previously experienced major public disputes surrounding industrial-scale water allocation and infrastructure capacity involving large corporate facilities such as Amgen. Those lessons should not be ignored as the state evaluates additional high-consumption computational infrastructure proposals dependent upon reliable access to clean freshwater resources.

The Foundation also submits that House Bill 7695 cannot be evaluated in isolation from the broader pattern of industrial infrastructure expansion already occurring within Rhode Island.

Recent controversies surrounding Quonset Point involving dredged materials, sewage sludge processing proposals, battery storage infrastructure, and related industrial expansion projects have exposed significant weaknesses in public transparency, cumulative infrastructure planning, and informed public participation. Residents and even local elected officials publicly stated that they were unaware of the scale and implications of projects advancing through overlapping administrative systems.

This pattern matters because House Bill 7695 proposes another layer of highly resource-intensive infrastructure while simultaneously granting extraordinary long-term tax exemptions and accelerated approval pathways.

For these reasons, The Foundation for Bioethics in Technology respectfully urges the committee to hold House Bill 7695 for further study until Rhode Island establishes stronger public-interest protections, enforceable infrastructure accountability standards, transparent environmental review mechanisms, and meaningful public participation safeguards regarding industrial-scale data infrastructure.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachael McIntosh

Executive Director

The Foundation for Bioethics in Technology

director@bioethics.tech & bioethicsdirector@gmail.com

The Foundation for Bioethics in Technology is a USA-based, non-political, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our mission is to ensure the next generation inherits not just convenience, but dignity and freedom because innovation without ethics is catastrophe.

STAY HUMAN EVERYONE!

EIN 88-1132137 | <https://bioethics.tech>

Sources / Supporting Context

- Rhode Island House Bill 7695 (2026) – Qualified Data Center Tax Exemptions
- EcoRI News – “Energy-Intensive Data Center Proposed for Woods of Smithfield”
- West Passage Action / Quonset Watch materials regarding cumulative infrastructure and public transparency concerns
- Angel Lopez Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bills 2346 and 2776 (March 9, 2026)