

**From:** [Laurel Facey](#)  
**To:** [SitingBoard Filing \(DPU\)](#)  
**Subject:** comments on siting and other issues  
**Date:** Friday, May 16, 2025 3:24:52 PM

---

Dear policymakers,

I want to add these comments, in addition to those I made orally at the stakeholder session in Holyoke on May 5th, to your thinking:

I would like to introduce the big picture to the issue of siting and permitting of clean energy in Massachusetts. The purpose of the enormous growth of this industry needs to be part of the equation.

We must not permit locating infrastructure for energy or other commercial purposes that destroys our natural habitat upon which life depends. The question we must ask is what is it that we need that energy for.

One example can be found in the experience of the Commonwealth of Virginia where increased energy production feeds not only the needs of its residents, but also its mighty corporations.

In northern Virginia, the purpose of increased energy production has not been to meet the basic needs of the people. There has been a massive influx of data centers and adjacent electrical substations. One of the latest projects is a 466,000-square-foot warehouse which, like the others already there, holds rows of high-speed servers powering everything done on phones and computers. Northern Virginia has more than 300 of these facilities. Over 25% of all power produced in Virginia in 2023 has gone to data centers. That could grow to 46% by 2030. It is estimated that a mid-sized data center uses the same water usage every day as 1,000 households. The huge diesel generators that help power these centers send toxic pollutants into the atmosphere.

These centers are attractive to governments. In 2024 they generated \$1 billion in tax revenues for Virginia. They also create some direct jobs and more indirect jobs. Benefits such as these are not equally distributed however.

Virginia Beach is also dealing with massive bitcoin mining centers. They have massive computer mainframes which use lots of electricity and require large air conditioning units to keep the computers properly cooled. These air conditioners create very loud noise which overwhelms nearby residential neighborhoods. In Texas, the air pollution is becoming deadly from such new and unnecessary uses of our energy creation.

The rapid growth spurt of artificial intelligence demand and usage will need ever more of such data centers. This too is not basic to our life on earth and may have

negative unforeseen consequences.

Virginia Beach is also the point of entry into the East coast of massive communications cables from Europe and South America. These require a plethora of electrical support structures. How are these issues being addressed?

It is not simply the financial support of these projects that I question, although we know that ratepayers often bear an inordinate burden without receiving a commensurate benefit, but it is the ethics of energy production whose purposes are not in line with our values and the production of which has a deadly side effect on terrestrial life.