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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

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September 24, 2026

Via Email

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Vice President of
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National Grid
Caroline Hon
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Pricing

Unitil
Karen Asbury
Director of Regulatory
Affairs

**re: Directive to Electric Distribution Companies regarding data center
interconnection requests, pursuant to Executive Order No. 658**

Dear Electric Distribution Company Representatives:

On September 8, 2026, Governor Healey issued Executive Order Number 658: Establishing Requirements for Responsible Data Center Development and Operations in Massachusetts to Protect and Support Ratepayers, Communities, and the Environment ("E.O. 658").¹ Section 4 of E.O. 658 requests that the Department of Public Utilities ("Department") ensure Electric Distribution Companies ("EDCs") "take measures to eliminate speculative data center projects from interconnection queues." Further, to protect the viability of other interconnecting projects including housing, businesses, and distributed energy resources, the Department should require the EDCs to ensure the legitimacy of data center projects with electricity demand greater than 25 megawatts ("MW"). E.O. No. 658, Section 4.

¹ Mass. Exec. Order No. 658, [Establishing Requirements for Responsible Data Center Development and Operations in Massachusetts to Protect and Support Ratepayers, Communities, and the Environment](#) (Sept. 8, 2026).

Prior to the issuance of E.O., Governor Healey took two executive actions aimed at protecting ratepayers from any exploitative actions by data center operators. First, in March of this year, the Governor issued Executive Order Number 654, which, among other things, urged the Department to consider the growth of large commercial customers, including data centers, while investigating strategies to ensure energy independence and affordability for Massachusetts ratepayers.² Next, on June 25, 2026, the Governor announced her Statement of Expectations for Responsible Data Center Development and Operations in Massachusetts (“Data Center Framework”)³ and paused acceptance of applications for the Qualified Data Center Sales and Use Tax Exemption.⁴ Relevant to the Department, the Data Center Framework outlines the Governor’s expectations that data centers “bring [their] own clean energy,” to meet 100 percent of the data center’s demand.⁵

These three executive actions call upon the Department, and the Energy Facilities Siting Board, to carefully review data center development in Massachusetts to protect the Commonwealth’s ratepayers. Accordingly, the Department hereby directs Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company d/b/a Unitil, NSTAR Electric Company d/b/a Eversource Energy, and Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company, each d/b/a National Grid to each make an informational filing that includes:

1. A list of all load projects with an electricity demand greater than 25 MW currently in the EDC’s interconnection queue and the specific type of facility (e.g., data center, manufacturing facility, wastewater treatment facility, etc.).
2. A list of all data center projects with an electricity demand greater than 1 MW currently in its interconnection queue, including each project’s queue position and current status (including estimated interconnection cost and timeline for each project).

² Mass. Exec. Order No. 654, 1571 Mass. Reg., [To Secure Massachusetts’ Energy Future by Establishing an Energy Supply Plan that Drives Affordability and Reliability](#), at Section 3.4. (March 16, 2026).

³ Healey-Driscoll Admin., [Statement of Expectations for Responsible Data Center Development and Operations in Massachusetts](#) (“Data Center Framework”) (June 25, 2026), available at the [Governor’s press release on Responsible Data Centers Framework](#).

⁴ Mass. Exec. Office of Econ. Dev., [Massachusetts Qualified Data Center Sales and Use Tax Exemption](#), available at [the Massachusetts Qualified Data Center Sales and Use Tax Exemption page](#). (last visited September 24, 2026).

⁵ This expectation includes, for example, ensuring that clean energy generation sufficient to meet 100 percent of the data center’s demand is on-site, or connected or able to deliver into ISO New England Inc., and aligned with the eligibility requirements to qualify under the Clean Energy Standard. [Data Center Framework](#), at 3.

3. A detailed description of what current or planned measures the EDC takes (or plans to take) to eliminate speculative data center projects from interconnection queues including information collected (see 4 below), fees, deposits, and any other requirements.
4. A detailed list of all relevant data center queue information collected by the EDC including but not limited to:⁶
 - a. Project characteristics, including requested load (in MWs), application or study stage (e.g., pre-application, formal application, feasibility or interconnection study), and whether the customer has executed a service agreement or otherwise made a financial commitment;
 - b. Timing and location information, including the date the request was received, the requested or indicative energization date, and the approximate project location and serving substation;
 - c. System impacts, including identified transmission and distribution upgrades, estimated costs of the upgrades, additional enabled hosting capacity due to the upgrades, and the portion expected to be borne by the interconnecting customer versus ratepayers; and
 - d. Project attrition, including any projects that have withdrawn, been cancelled, delayed, or have reduced their requested load, with associated project size (in MWs) and relevant dates.
5. A detailed description of how the EDC plans to ensure that any data center projects with electricity demand greater than 25 MW are legitimate projects that do not lead to the inefficient use of EDC study and interconnection resources, and protect the viability of other projects, such as housing, other businesses, or distributed energy resources.
6. A detailed description of what steps the EDC could take to require data centers to bring their own clean energy to meet 100 percent of the data center's demand, and any Department action needed to enable the EDC to take these steps.

⁶ Where applicable, please provide supporting workpapers and calculations in the form of working Microsoft Excel spreadsheets with all cell references and formulae intact.

As is evident from the Governor's Executive Order, this information is a key element in ensuring responsible data center development in the Commonwealth. Each EDC shall file its respective company specific informational filing in docket D.P.U. 26-DC with copies to me, Andrew Strumfels, at andrew.w.strumfels@mass.gov; Chief Deputy General Counsel Janine Vargas at janine.vargas@mass.gov; and Secretary Peter Ray at dpu.efiling@mass.gov, **no later than close of business (5:00 p.m.) on Friday, October 23, 2026.**

Please contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

/s/

Andrew Strumfels
Director of Government Relations &
Public Affairs

cc: Jeremy C. McDiarmid, Chair, Department of Public Utilities
Michael Judge, Undersecretary of Energy, Exec. Office of Energy & Env'tl. Affairs
Melissa Lavinson, Executive Director, Office of Energy Transformation
Andrew Greene, Director, Energy Facilities Siting Board
David B. Lyons, General Counsel, Department of Public Utilities
Janine Vargas, Chief Deputy General Counsel, Department of Public Utilities
Peter Ray, Secretary, Department of Public Utilities