

VERONICA ESCOBAR
16TH DISTRICT, TEXAS
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION,
VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE



Congress of the United States
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Washington, DC 20515

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NEW DEMOCRAT COALITION
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March 25, 2026

Kevin Martin
Vice President, Global Policy
Meta
575 7th St. NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Martin,

As Meta continues to build out its data center in El Paso, Texas, it is crucial that Meta is transparent with El Pasoans about how this new venture will impact our community. As I mentioned to you during our meeting recently, constituents have reached out with questions about the data center, what kind of permanent jobs it would create, and how the data center will impact everything from our water to electricity bills. El Pasoans deserve answers to these questions, and some of the answers should come directly from Meta. I respectfully request that Meta holds public listening sessions with the El Paso community and provide greater clarity into how the data center will impact all of us.

As the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) takes hold, tech giants, like Meta, are expected to invest more than \$364 billion to accelerate the construction of data centers across the country.¹ These data centers use an exorbitant amount of energy, and when energy usage increases without increased energy production, rates go up for consumers. In fact, in Virginia, electricity costs for areas near data centers have increased by 267% over the last five years.² In El Paso, Meta has engaged with El Paso Electric (EPE) to rapidly and significantly expand EPE's capacity to meet Meta's needs. El Pasoans are interested in knowing more about that.

In addition to the potential financial implications of this data center on El Pasoans, there are also significant environmental impacts to consider. Despite a public commitment that Meta made regarding using renewable energy for the El Paso data center, Meta has walked this back and has mentioned to me that there are renewable projects they are committed to outside of El Paso. It's our understanding that your energy needs will be met through gas powered turbines, which are a major source of greenhouse gas emissions and have a significant carbon footprint.

¹ ["How data centers may lead to high electricity bills" Harvard Law Today. Reed, Rachel. September 3, 2025](#)

² ["Here's how AI data centers affect the electrical grid" CNN. Bacon, Auzinea. January 18, 2026.](#)

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Similarly, the water consumption of this data center and how that need will be restored to the community requires clarification. Large data centers like this one can use up to five million gallons per day, which is equivalent to a town of 50,000.³ Meta has committed to restoring its water usage by returning 200% of its water consumption to local watersheds. Despite my repeated requests for information about this, how Meta will do this remains unclear. My constituents would also like to learn more.

As Meta enters our community, it is my hope that you are interested in building community trust, which can only be obtained through a transparent process. Our community will live with the consequences of Meta's data center, and we deserve robust community engagement. I respectfully request timely public listening sessions with our community, and would like you to participate in a town hall meeting with me and members of our local utility companies. They have agreed to participate, and we await your response to begin planning it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Veronica Escobar".

Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress

³ "Data Centers and Water Consumption" Environmental and Energy Study Institute. Yanez-Barnuevo, Miguel. June 25, 2025.