

Data centers are one of the most divisive issues right now, mostly focusing on their water and power usage. In recent months large data centers that could be a single building all the way up to a compound several thousand acres large, have been popping up all over Texas. These data centers large and small have been negatively affecting their own communities by severely increasing electricity costs for the surrounding area. Now Governor Greg Abbott has been calling for the state energy regulators to be required to prevent data center costs being passed on to citizens. Earlier this year Sen. Paul Bettencourt called for a moratorium on data centers and even called Ken Paxton to help. Hood County actually did pass a 14-day moratorium, but was given a 100 million dollar lawsuit among others. The local county couldn't handle said lawsuit leading them to drop the moratorium. So earlier in the year several different voices backed by the people wanted to have the data center growth ended with moratoriums, but when the local counties enacted them, they were hit with lawsuits they couldn't individually afford. This caused several locals to believe the legislative branch failed to stop the overreach of Data centers and their parent companies, this is when the Executive branch joined the fray. Governor Greg Abbott's call actually started a state required survey of all data centers which many data centers actually denied to answer or gave short answers that misrepresented their resource usage. Even with the couple's responses lawmakers discovered that their current understanding was "woefully lacking" and that they couldn't currently make a long-term decision. Now not answering this survey technically is a Class C misdemeanor, but now it's been a month and zero action has been taken to punish the companies. Although Governor Abbott didn't shoot down data centers completely he did restart the discussion that so many called for. On page 60 of the textbook it talks about how the powers of government are shared to help regulate power, known as the separation of powers and checks and balances, this is a perfect example of the powers of the government working together to try and help the current citizens they were voted in by. This is also an example of one part of the government failing the people, but then another branch stood up and acted on public demand.

The reason this is so important to me is that my grandparents live in Granbury, Texas, where three different Data centers are currently being built. In the city of Granbury the current administration has been very unwelcoming of tough questions and has deflected several public statements accusing them of dishonest actions. Several residents have asked the local government to stop the expansion, but the current local government has claimed that it is crucial for their current economy to grow. My grandparents are currently worried that it could affect them through their power and water bill because many believe that the current system can't easily handle the influx of power and water usage. I personally didn't care about this hot button issue, but then it happened to my family where my grandparents are just a couple dozen acres from a data center being built. One thing my family can be thankful of is that in our representative democracy we can vote for different politicians in different branches to try and get our voice heard in the legislative and executive branch of government.

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