

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Member Doris Matsui

Markup of 29 Bills, Full Committee

July 20, 2026

I'm glad this Committee is finally taking action to control rising electricity costs.

Nobody should be paying higher energy bills because of data centers. Tech companies are making money hand-over-fist. They can afford to pay for the necessary upgrades to our electric grid to support their data centers.

I support the Ratepayer Protection Act and the Protecting Families from AI Data Center Energy Costs Act. I think these are a good starting point. But it's not enough! The American people expect our government to do more to protect the public from data center impacts.

Data centers should be using clean power. We've seen some companies running dirty diesel and gas generators nonstop, polluting neighboring communities and threatening public health. We have to do something to protect those communities.

And it's not just about energy. Data centers shouldn't jeopardize local water supplies, and like the electric grid, tech companies need to pay for any necessary upgrades to local water infrastructure, ensuring families and small businesses aren't left covering the cost of higher water bills.

We also need to be thoughtful about where these facilities are built. We shouldn't be cutting down healthy forests or filling in wetlands to build data centers. We should be building these facilities on brownfields or other disturbed lands.

And most of all, nobody should be doing these deals in the dead of night. Tech companies need to be open and transparent with local communities. Tech companies must treat communities with respect and invest in the communities they want to build in.

So, I'm glad we're holding this markup to protect Americans from higher energy costs, but we need to think bigger. We need a comprehensive framework for how data centers should be sited, built, and operated. Because the American people are fed up, and it's our job to protect our constituents.

This Committee, between the Communications and Technology Subcommittee and the Energy and Environment Subcommittees, has wide ranging jurisdiction over data centers. So, I hope we can work together on a broader framework that addresses the full scope of impacts that communities are facing across the country.