

I am writing to express clear and unequivocal opposition to the construction of Data Center(s) adjacent to the State Mental Hospital located in Osawatomie, KS. This proposal represents a failure to protect some of the most vulnerable people in our community and exposes a dangerous gap in current law.

State mental hospitals exist to provide stability, safety and a calm, quiet environment conducive to healing. Data centers are industrial facilities. They generate constant mechanical noise, vibration, light pollution, heavy construction activity, diesel generator emissions, and increased traffic—all factors that have been proven to increase stress, sleep disruption, anxiety, agitation, and cognitive strain. These are not minor inconveniences; they directly undermine psychiatric treatment and recovery.

Placing industrial infrastructure next to a mental health facility disregards decades of research showing that environmental stressors worsen psychological symptoms, prolong hospital stays, and negatively affect both patients and staff. Individuals receiving inpatient psychiatric care cannot simply “adapt” or relocate away from these impacts. They are captive to the environment we choose for them.

That this project is even under consideration exposes a critical legislative failure. The laws in place are insufficient in providing protection and safeguards for all citizens of Kansas but especially for those in our care. It is a dangerous mindset to even consider industrial development being sited next to mental health institutions. This could cause serious psychological harm to patients and potential physical harm to staff members who are then at risk. What would never be tolerated near a children’s hospital or within neighborhoods should not be permitted near a state psychiatric hospital.

I call on lawmakers to act immediately by:

- \* Prohibiting industrial facilities, including data centers, from being built adjacent to mental health hospitals and to immediately stop any and all that are currently in development or under any phase of construction.
- \* Requiring mandatory mental health impact assessments—not optional studies—before approving nearby development of any kind.
- \* Centering the rights, dignity, and medical needs of patients over corporate convenience and local government’s monetary gain.
- \* Having strict laws in place to ensure that the State of Kansas is protecting disabled, fragile and vulnerable populations held in state facilities and thus protecting Kansans from liability and litigation if their rights and safety are not protected.

Mental health patients deserve immediate protection from the dangers posed being in direct proximity to data centers. Silence and inaction here signal that their well-being is negotiable. It is not.

This Northland project in Osawatomie cannot be allowed to proceed. Kansas laws must change to ensure careless disregard by developers, corporations, a rogue city manager, bureaucrats, or any other government body never happens again.

Sincerely,

Polly Inscore

Sent from my iPhone