angus reid global

every opinion tells a story

More Americans Would Fight a Data Center Than a Nuclear Reactor



Two-thirds (67%) would oppose a large data center proposed near home, the most of seven energy projects tested, and a third say they are tired of hearing about data centers (33%).

October 26, 2026 | Conversations & Priorities

Angus Reid Global conducted a conversational mobile survey from October 10 to 14, 2026 among a representative sample of 2,006 Americans. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Results were weighted by age, gender, region and political affiliation to align with the population. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned. Detailed tables accompany this release.

CONTACT: natalie.lacey@angusreid-global.com ; paul.abbate@angusreid-global.com; visit: www.angusreid-global.com for our interactive data tool behind this release.

Key Findings

The least welcome neighbor.

67% would oppose a large data center within about 50 miles of home, more than for any of the seven energy projects tested and more than a small nuclear reactor (59%). 44% would actively fight one.

Opposition is broad.

It's similar in rural (69%) and urban (64%) areas, and Democrats are the most resistant: 77% oppose, and 55% would actively fight.

Information shifts intensity more than support.

With no details, 15% support a local data center. With jobs, tax revenue or a guarantee that bills won't rise, support rises to 31–35%, and "strongly oppose" falls from 61% to 34–40%. No version wins a majority.

Fatigue is setting in.

64% have heard a lot about data centers, but a third (33%) are already tired of hearing about it.

Cost expectations are settled.

78% say tech companies should pay for the new power infrastructure, across all parties.

Concerns are tangible.

In their own words, opponents most often raise power and bills, water use and noise.

Implications

1

This is an issue with a unified strong base. With 44% ready to fight, the public is prepared to take a stand.

2

However, people can be swayed by the right message. Jobs, local tax revenue and bill protection each roughly double support. If the goal is to build support, messages need to be specific and local, such as how many jobs and which schools and roads.

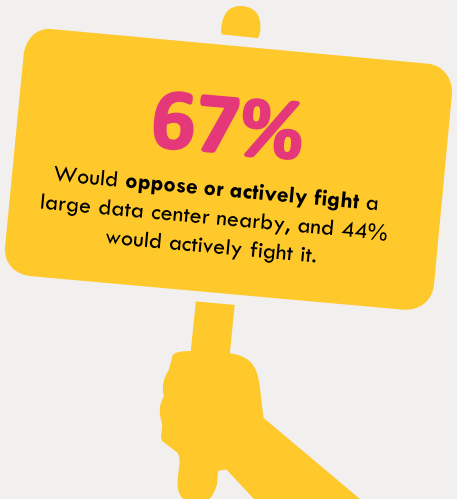
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The beneficiaries need to be front and center on the issue for any permission. 78% already expect it, so a bill guarantee will be judged a minimum commitment rather than a selling point.

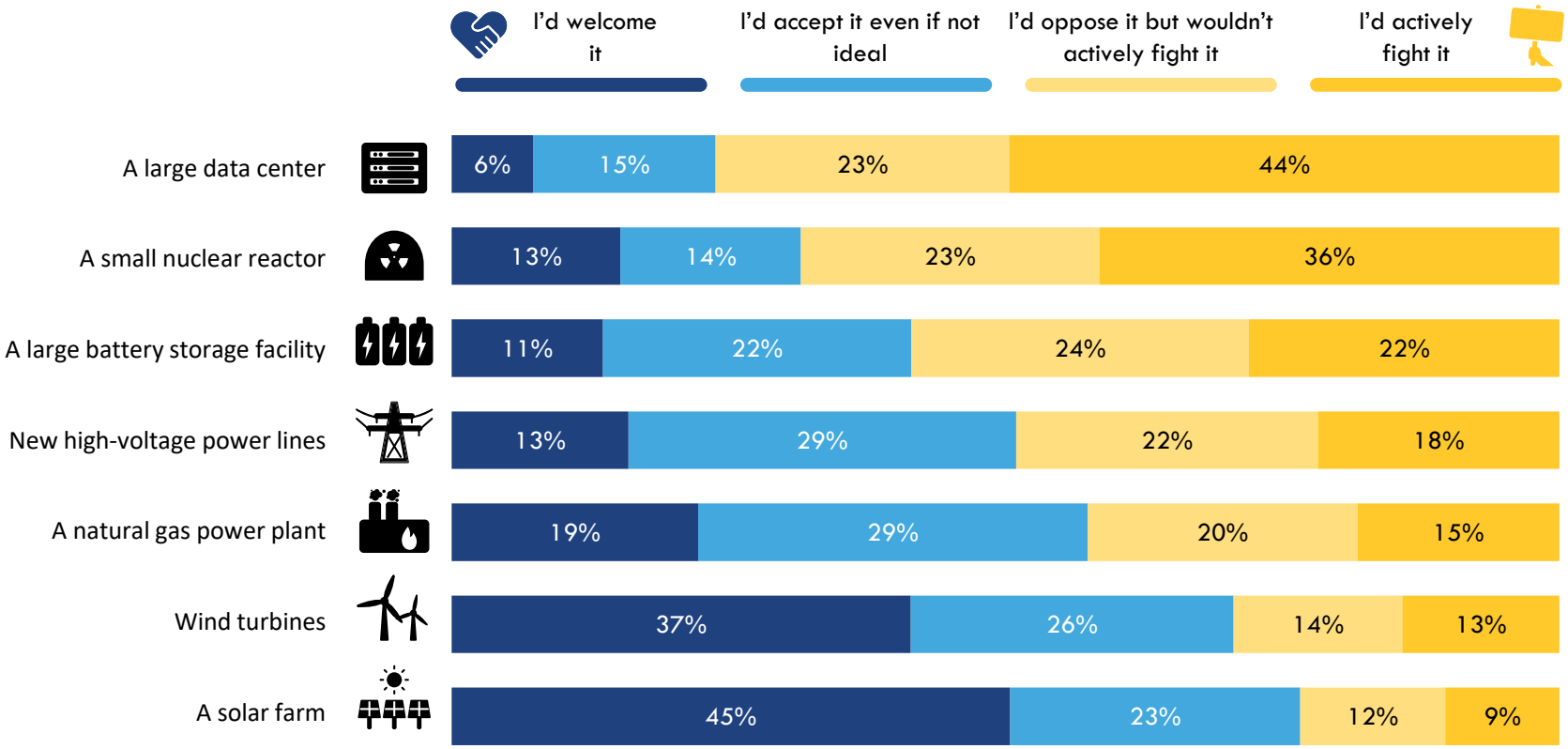
Solar farms and wind turbines are welcome. A data center is not.

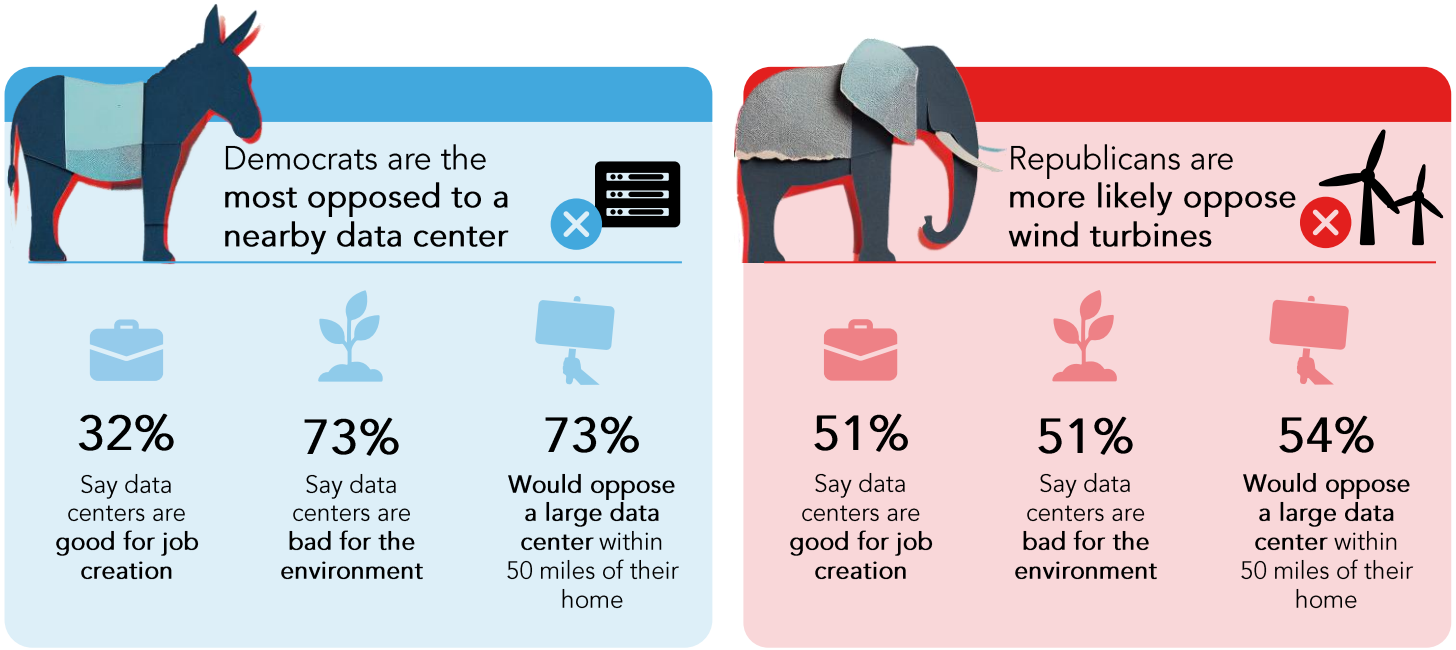
Asked how they would feel about seven energy projects proposed within about 50 miles of their home, **Americans are more likely to resist a large data center than any other, including a small nuclear reactor.**

New data from Angus Reid Global finds 67% would oppose or actively fight a large data center nearby, (44% would actively fight it). That compares with 59% who would oppose a small nuclear reactor (36% would actively fight it), 47% a large battery storage facility, 36% a natural gas power plant and just 21% for a solar farm.



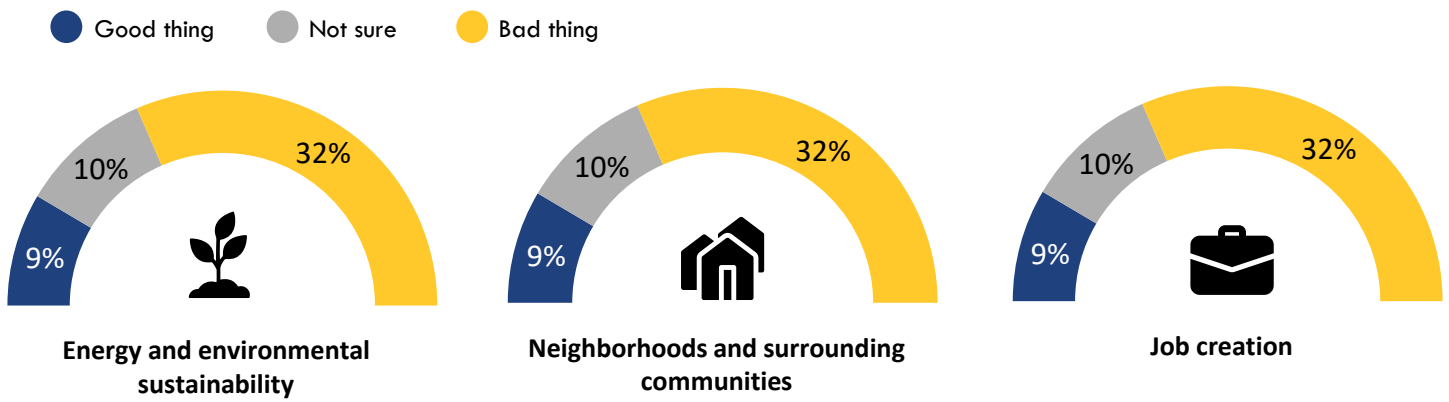
IF EACH OF THE FOLLOWING WERE PROPOSED WITHIN ABOUT 50 MILES OF YOUR HOME, HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT IT? *(All American surveyed, n=2,006)*





OVERALL, DO YOU THINK LARGE AI DATA CENTERS AND COMPUTING FACILITIES ARE A GOOD THING OR BAD THING FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING?

(All American surveyed, n=2,006)



The reaction is consistent across community types, with 69% of rural and 64% of urban Americans opposed, and it echoes broader doubts: 63% say large AI data centers are a bad thing for energy and environmental sustainability and 63% say the same for neighborhoods.

Democrats are the most opposed to a nearby data center (77% oppose or would fight it, including 55% who would actively fight it), compared with 69% of independents and 54% of Republicans. Republicans, by contrast, are more likely than Democrats to oppose wind turbines (38% versus 15%), while Democrats are more opposed to a natural gas power plant (43% versus 25%).

Overall, 63% say large AI data centers are a bad thing for energy and environmental sustainability and 63% say the same for neighborhoods and surrounding communities, a view held by 69% of rural Americans and 56% of those in urban areas. Job creation is the closest call, with 38% calling data centers a good thing for jobs and 40% a bad thing.

Republicans are the most positive. Among Republicans, 51% say data centers are good for job creation, rising to 59% among MAGA Republicans, compared with 32% of Democrats. On the environment, 73% of Democrats call them a bad thing, versus 51% of Republicans. Asked how they would feel if a large data center were proposed within about 50 miles of their home, 77% of Democrats and 54% of Republicans would oppose it or actively fight it.

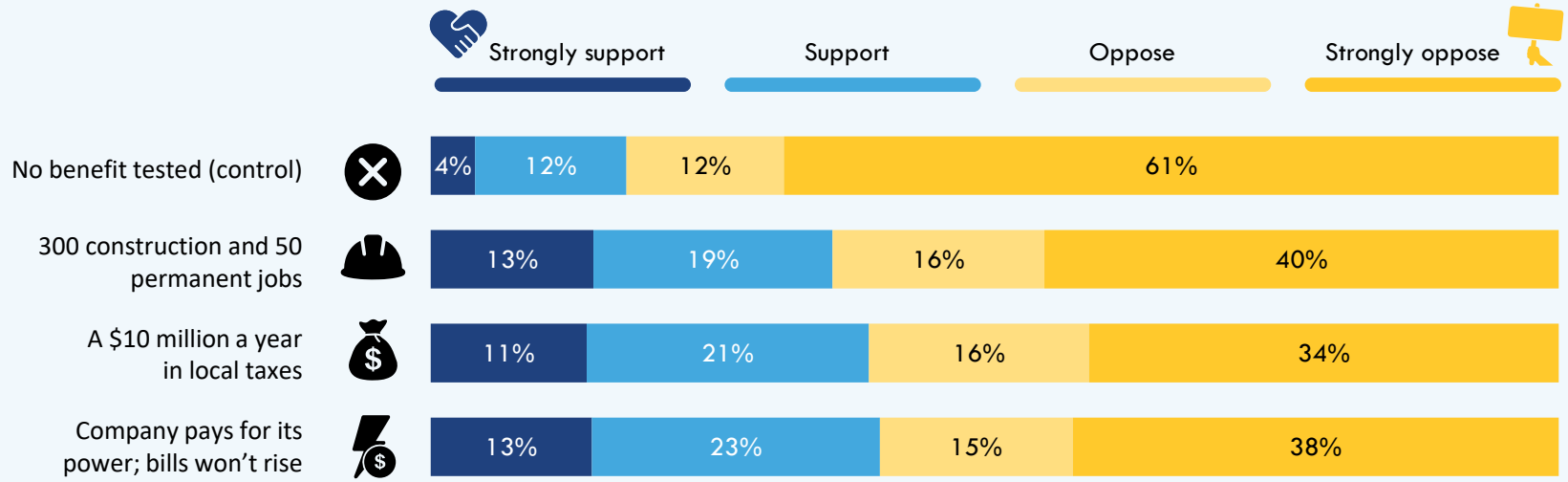
What moves the needle: jobs, tax revenue and a bill guarantee

Respondents were randomly shown one of four versions of a question about a large data center being built in their area. With no supporting messaging, 15% would support a data center within 50 miles and 73% would oppose it, including 61% who strongly oppose. Support is 31% when the project would bring about 300 construction jobs and 50 permanent local jobs, 32% when it would pay about $10 million a year in local taxes for schools and roads, and 35% when the company would be required to pay for all the new power it needs so local bills would not go up.

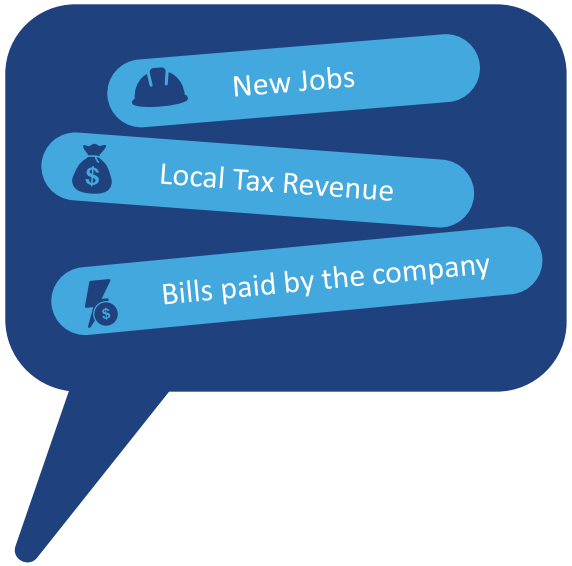
The biggest shift is in the intensity of opposition. Strong opposition falls from 61% with no details to 40% with jobs, 34% with local tax revenue and 38% with the bill guarantee. Republicans are more open than Democrats in each version, including 31% versus 8% with no details and 43% versus 29% with the bill guarantee.

A COMPANY WANTS TO BUILD A LARGE DATA CENTER IN YOUR AREA. WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE THIS DATA CENTER BEING BUILT IN YOUR AREA?

(Each respondent saw one version; A n=506, B n=499, C n=502, D n=499)



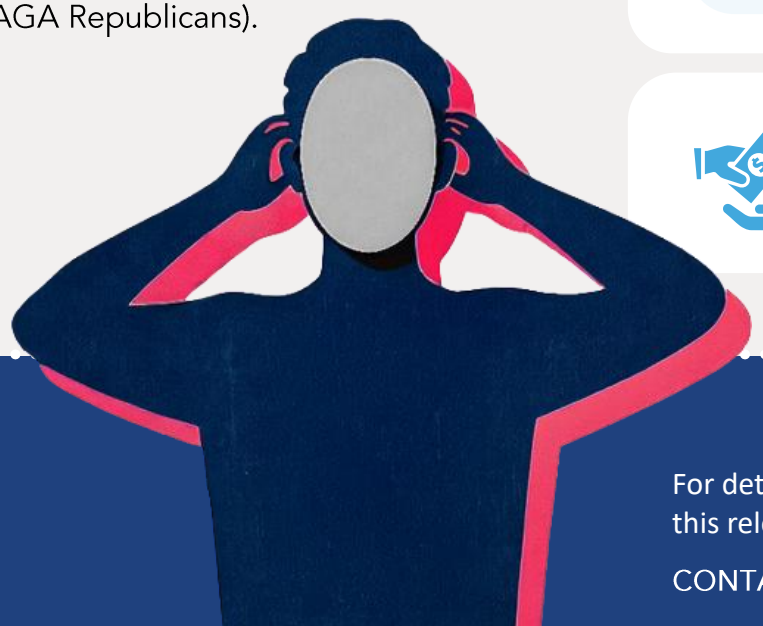
Strong opposition to data centers declines with messaging about:



Data center fatigue is setting in

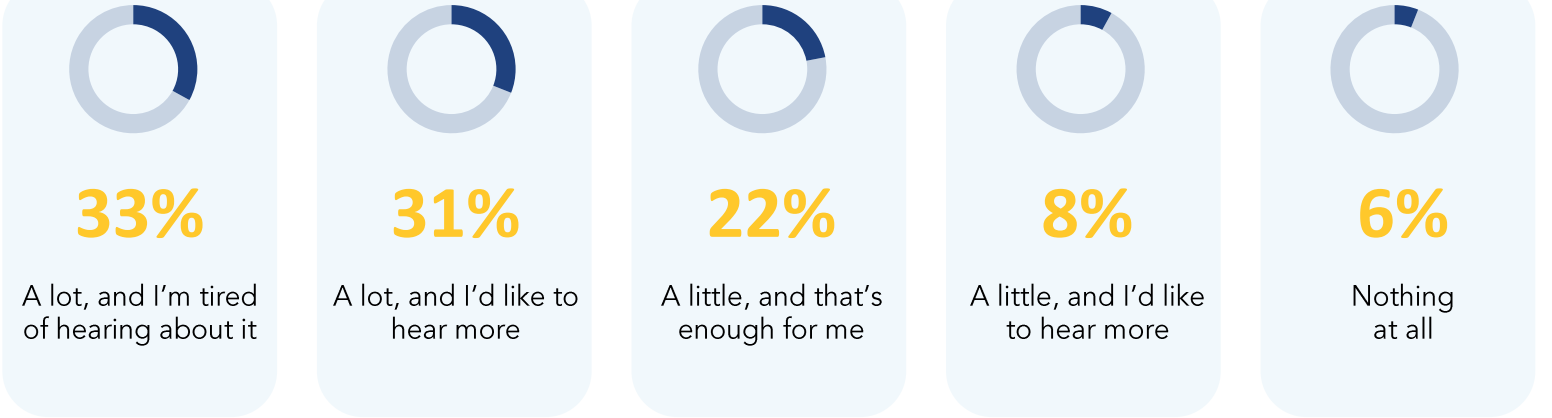
Data centers have broken through:

64% say they have heard a lot over the past several months about AI data centers and the electricity they consume. That group splits almost evenly between those who are tired of hearing about it (33% of all Americans) and those who would like to hear more (31%). Appetite for more is highest among university graduates (39%, versus 21% of those with high school or less) and Democrats (35%, versus 26% of Republicans and 23% of MAGA Republicans).



OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, HOW MUCH HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT AI DATA CENTERS AND THE AMOUNT OF ELECTRICITY THEY CONSUME?

(All American surveyed, n=2,006)



On whom should pay for the new power plants and lines that data centers need, there is little debate: **78% say the tech companies that own them.**

For detailed results by age, gender, region, income, party and other groups, see the tables that accompany this release.

CONTACT: natalie.lacey@angusreid-global.com; paul.abbate@angusreid-global.com