

Resolution 26-107
Public Health Oversight of Large-Scale Data Center Development in Florida
FMA Medical Students Section

1 Whereas, Large-scale data centers are expanding rapidly in the United States due to increasing use
2 of artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and digital infrastructure, with the U.S. Department of
3 Energy reporting that data centers consumed approximately 4.4% of total U.S. electricity in 2023
4 and may consume 6.7% to 12.0% by 2028;¹ and

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6 Whereas, Florida is already among the leading states nationally in data-center development, with
7 Pew Research Center reporting 128 total data centers in Florida, including 120 operating facilities
8 and 8 planned facilities;^{2,3} and

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10 Whereas, Florida communities are already confronting large-scale proposals, including a Fort
11 Meade project reported as a \$2.6 billion, 4.4 million-square-foot data center campus on
12 approximately 1,300 acres, with reported water demand of roughly 50,000 gallons per day;^{4,5} and

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14 Whereas, Recent modeling estimates that U.S. data centers could contribute to nearly 1,300
15 premature deaths annually by 2030 and that data center-related environmental externalities
16 imposed approximately \$25 billion in public health and environmental costs in 2025 alone;^{6,7} and

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18 Whereas, Data-center expansion is increasingly relevant to rural and semi-rural communities, as
19 Pew Research Center found that 67% of planned U.S. data centers are located in rural areas, while
20 39% of planned facilities are in counties that currently have no data center, raising concerns that
21 new facilities may be proposed in communities with limited public health infrastructure;² and

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23 Whereas, Rapid growth in data-center electricity demand increases pressure on power generation
24 and grid reliability, which is especially relevant in Florida where hurricanes, extreme heat, and
25 flooding can endanger residents whose health depends on reliable power during
26 emergencies;^{1,8,12,13} and

27
28 Whereas, Data centers often rely on backup power systems, including diesel-fueled generators,
29 and diesel exhaust contains fine particulate matter and nitrogen oxides associated with respiratory
30 and cardiovascular disease;⁹ and

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32 Whereas, A 2025 national analysis of 550 EPA-regulated data centers found that approximately 4
33 million people live within one mile of these facilities and that nearby communities had above-
34 median levels of fine particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, and diesel particulate matter, raising
35 environmental health and justice concerns relevant to future siting decisions;¹⁰ and

36
37 Whereas, Florida Senate Bill 484 (2026), signed into law as Chapter 2026-65, recognizes the need
38 for additional oversight by preserving local authority over land-use regulation, requiring Public
39 Service Commission tariff protections so large-load customers pay their own cost of service, and
40 allowing curtailment or interruption of service when necessary to maintain grid stability or protect
41 public safety;⁸ and

42
43 Whereas, While SB 484 created new consumptive-use permit requirements and authorized
44 reclaimed-water requirements for data centers, these provisions do not replace the need for public

health review of cumulative water, environmental, and community impacts as additional facilities are proposed;⁸ and

Whereas, Existing AMA policy supports environmental sustainability and physician engagement in protecting community health, and responsible digital infrastructure development can coexist with evidence-based protections for public health and the environment;^{14,15} and

Whereas, The Florida Medical Association (FMA) has previously adopted policy supporting transparent disclosure and health monitoring of industrial environmental exposures, including favoring legislation that requires full disclosure of chemicals placed into the natural environment, monitoring of human exposures, and physician and public education concerning the potential health and environmental effects of industrial activity;¹⁶ and

Whereas, The FMA has existing policy supporting physician engagement in environmental health, public and professional dialogue about environmental threats to health, reductions in carbon dioxide emissions, and legislative efforts addressing the health effects of environmental degradation and climate change;¹¹ therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Florida Medical Association (FMA) support evidence-based public health review of large-scale data center development in Florida, including transparent review of how proposed facilities may affect local energy demand, water resources, air quality, grid reliability, land-use compatibility, and surrounding community health; and be it further

RESOLVED, That our FMA support transparent reporting of data center energy demands, emissions, and water use to enable public health entities to anticipate and mitigate health impacts on the local populations.

Fiscal Note:

Description	Amount	Budget Narrative
10 Staff hours	\$1,700	Can be accomplished with current staff
Total	\$1,700	\$0 added to the operating budget

Fiscal notes are an estimate of the cost to implement a given Resolution. All Resolutions that are adopted by the House of Delegates will be referred to the FMA Committee on Finance and Appropriations for fiscal consideration.

Reference Committee: I – Health, Education, and Public Policy

References

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11. Florida Medical Association. FMA Public Policy Compendium. Florida Medical Association; 2025. Accessed May 14, 2026.
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13. U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit. *Impact of Hurricanes on Health Care Facilities*. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; 2024.

14. American Medical Association. H-135.973 Stewardship of the Environment. AMA PolicyFinder. Accessed May 15, 2026. <https://policysearch.ama-assn.org/policyfinder/detail/H-135.973?uri=%2FAMADoc%2FHOD.xml-0-344.xml>
15. American Medical Association. H-135.923 AMA Advocacy for Environmental Sustainability and Climate. AMA PolicyFinder. Accessed May 15, 2026. <https://policysearch.ama-assn.org/policyfinder/detail/ama%20advocacy%20for%20environmental%20sustainability?uri=%2FAMADoc%2FHOD-135.923.xml>
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Relevant FMA Policies

P 170.002 Collaborative on Health and the Environment

The Florida Medical Association supports the concept of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment (CHE) whose central purposes include: (1) providing accurate scientific information to CHE Partners regarding environmental threats to health; (2) creating a shared space within which Partners can develop collaborative relationships that further shared goals; and (3) raising the level of public and professional dialogue about environmental threats to health and the research options, policy options, and citizen initiatives that may contribute to reducing the burden of environmentally related diseases and conditions. (BOG March 2004) (Reaffirmed HOD 2018) (Reaffirmed HOD 2019)

P 170.003 PHYSICIANS RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

The Florida Medical Association adopts policy relating to Physicians' Responsibilities for the Environment and Health as follows: (1) physicians are encouraged to educate themselves and their peers about the issues of the environment and public health; (2) physicians are encouraged to conduct research to further the scientific understanding of the environment and health; (3) physicians are encouraged to adopt sound environmental practices in their homes and offices, including reducing pollution, reducing waste and fostering recycling; (4) physicians are encouraged to promote sound environmental practices in their hospitals and communities; and (5) physicians are encouraged to be public spokespersons for environmental stewardship. (BOG July 2004) (Reaffirmed HOD 2018)

P 170.008 REDUCE CO2 EMISSIONS

The Florida Medical Association urges state government to develop energy use policies that include a plan to reduce Florida's projected CO2 emissions, to adopt a renewable energy requirement for a portion of the state's electric power and to improve efficiency standards for transportation, businesses, homes and appliances; and further urges Florida's Congressional Delegation to support federal legislation to regulate CO2 emissions and to reduce the predicted increases in CO2 release nationally and worldwide; and further through its delegation to the American Medical

Association (AMA), encourages the AMA to further the principles of this policy. (BOG July 2007) (Reaffirmed HOD 2015) (Reaffirmed HOD 2023)

P 170.014 SUCCESS: SUPPORTING CLIMATE CHANGE EFFORTS

The Florida Medical Association will place on their website educational resources on the links between environmental degradation and tangible health problems, such as air pollution, insect-borne diseases, and heatstroke; further the FMA will support legislation that focuses on the health imperative of addressing climate change. (Amended Res 19-109, HOD 2019)

P 420.038 NATURAL GAS FRACKING: MONITORING TO PROTECT HUMAN HEALTH

The Florida Medical Association (FMA) favors legislation that: 1) requires the full disclosure of chemicals placed into the natural environment for oil & gas extraction, including disclosure of the specific chemicals and wastewater injected, quantities, & locations 2) requires the State of Florida to record and monitor this data, to monitor for human exposures, and to share this information with physicians & Floridians 3) supports research into the health impacts of oil and gas exploration and extraction in Florida; and further the FMA favors measures to educate physicians and the public concerning the potential health and environmental effects resulting from oil and gas extraction. (HOD July 2014) (Reaffirmed HOD 2022)

P 420.043 IMPROVING HEALTH OUTCOMES BY ADDRESSING AIR QUALITY IN FLORIDA

The Florida Medical Association will support collaboration with interested organizations to examine evidence based policies to determine the potential benefits of improved emission standards and polices in Florida, with an emphasis on protecting the respiratory and cardiovascular health of all Floridians. (Amended Res 17-112, HOD 2017) (2024 - technical change because of duplicative numbering) (Reaffirmed HOD 2025)

Relevant AMA policies

Global Climate Change and Human Health H-135.938

1. Our American Medical Association supports scientific consensus that the Earth is undergoing adverse global climate change and that anthropogenic contributions are significant. These climate changes have adversely affected the physical and mental health of people. We recognize that minoritized and marginalized populations, children, pregnant people, the elderly, rural communities, and those who are economically disadvantaged will suffer disproportionate harm from climate change.[...]
2. Encourages physicians to assist in educating patients and the public on the physical and mental health effects of climate change and on environmentally sustainable practices, and to serve as role models for promoting environmental sustainability.

3. Encourages physicians to work with local and state health departments to strengthen the public health infrastructure to ensure that the global health effects of climate change can be anticipated and responded to more efficiently, and that adaptation interventions are equitable and prioritize the needs of the populations most at risk.

Reducing Sources of Diesel Exhaust D-135.996

Our AMA will: (1) encourage the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set and enforce the most stringent feasible standards to control pollutant emissions from both large and small non-road engines including construction equipment, farm equipment, boats and trains; (2) encourage all states to continue to pursue opportunities to reduce **diesel exhaust** pollution, including **reducing** harmful emissions from glider trucks and existing **diesel** engines; (3) call for all trucks traveling within the United States, regardless **of** country **of** origin, to be in compliance with the most stringent and current **diesel** emissions standards promulgated by US EPA; and (4) send a letter to US EPA Administrator opposing the EPA's proposal to roll back the "glider Kit Rule" which would effectively allow the unlimited sale **of** re-conditioned **diesel** truck engines that do not meet current EPA new **diesel** engine emission standards.

Environmental Contributors to Disease and Advocating for Environmental Justice D-135.997

1. Our American Medical Association will advocate for the greater public and private funding for research into the environment causes of disease, and urge the National Academy of Sciences to undertake an authoritative analysis of environmental causes of disease.
2. Our AMA asks the steering committee of the Medicine and Public Health Initiative Coalition to consider environmental contributors to disease and environmental racism as a priority public health issues.
3. Our AMA encourages federal, state, and local agencies to address and remediate environmental injustice, environmental racism, and all other environmental conditions that are adversely impacting health, especially in marginalized communities.
4. Our AMA will lobby Congress to support ongoing initiatives that include reproductive health outcomes and development particularly in minority populations in Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Justice policies.

AMA Advocacy for Environmental Sustainability and Climate H-135.923

1. Our American Medical Association supports initiatives to promote environmental sustainability and other efforts to halt global climate change. [...]
2. Our AMA recognizes that climate resilience and mitigation efforts will be community-specific and supports physician engagement at the local level to promote community alliances for environmental justice and equity.