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I was born and raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and even if I wasn't, I still don't believe data centers should be located near where people live — whether rural or residential. We've already seen how data centers of various sizes can negatively impact the people and environments surrounding them.

Mayor Cavalier Johnson stated, "Every time I try to do something positive in this area, you guys jump all down my back." But many residents are asking: how is placing a data center in our community considered a positive improvement?

Data centers are known for their enormous energy consumption. They often require major electrical grid upgrades, create constant noise pollution, contribute to air pollution, and place heavy demands on local water resources for cooling systems. We should be preserving the Great Lakes — not placing additional strain on them.

With multiple data centers already planned or under construction across Wisconsin, how can residents be assured that our water resources will not be affected? Milwaukee residents have also experienced repeated power outages through WE Energies over the past year. How will adding another massive energy consumer impact the reliability of our electrical grid?

I also question who these projects truly benefit. Will the jobs created primarily go to the people living near the abandoned Walmart site, or will that community simply be left with the environmental and infrastructure burdens?

People are "jumping down" the mayor's back because they care deeply about Milwaukee, its neighborhoods, and the people who live here. Residents are concerned about the long-term effects these facilities may have on our communities, environment, wildlife, and overall quality of life.

If city leadership truly wants to improve Milwaukee, there are many urgent issues residents would rather see prioritized — repairing streets that are literally falling apart, addressing recurring power outages, reducing reckless speeding, and tackling violent crime throughout the city.

Milwaukee deserves development that directly improves the daily lives of its residents, not projects that may place additional strain on our resources and infrastructure.

Concerned Bay View resident,

Elizabeth A. Henkel