

HARVEY KRONBERG'S QUORUM REPORT

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Now at odds with Trump, Abbott gets big tech support on his guidelines from the industry giants building data centers in Texas

Google, Open AI, Meta and others weighed with support for Abbott's temporary guardrails; Democratic nominee for governor Gina Hinojosa said "When the companies being regulated are cheering for the rules, you know the rules were written for them, not for Texans"

After President **Donald Trump** said Gov. **Greg Abbott** is making a "mistake" to tap the breaks on construction of data centers in Texas, the biggest names in tech came out very strongly in the last 24 hours to say they support the governor's moves.

But insurgent Democrats – most of whom have joined with some Republicans like GOP Ag Commissioner **Sid Miller** in pushing for an immediate moratorium and special legislative session – said the whole thing is a ruse to help Abbott deal with an issue with the potential to upend the November election.

"I saw Texas the other day sort of is against data centers," said Mr. Trump during an interview with DC-based **Puck News** on Friday. "I think it's a mistake."

"I'm not taking positions, I just think it's a mistake, because there are other communities that want it," Trump said. "When a community wants it, it means a lot of money is going to come into that community."

That same day, Abbott's spokesman **Andrew Mahaleris** said the issues emerging around data centers are unique in Texas because of rapid proliferation and potential strain on the

electricity grid.

“Many are unaware that [the Electric Reliability Council of Texas] is tracking a more than 500% increase in peak electricity demand. This unprecedented growth could endanger the reliability and stability of the Texas electric grid,” Mahaleris said. “The Governor’s pause requires data centers to provide [Public Utility Commission of Texas] and ERCOT with the required information for them to make fully informed decisions. Simply put, Texans must come first.”

After that disagreement played out on Friday, big tech players including **Google**, **Open AI**, **Meta**, and others either praised Abbott’s moves or made clear they’d comply with the guidelines.

Abbott spokes for Meta, [announcing on his office website](#) that the company will comply.

His Democratic opponent, Rep. **Gina Hinojosa**, wasn’t impressed.

“Greg Abbott expects Texans to be thankful to the data center corporations that are profiting off of our taxpayer dollars. He invited data centers into Texas, has taken millions of dollars in donations from their CEOs, and is now desperately seeking their help to save his own political career,” Hinojosa said. “Guidelines from the governor aren’t laws, so they won’t protect Texans – and that’s exactly how Abbott’s donors like it. What happens when these companies don’t comply? What happens on November 4th?”

She again called for a special session “to put in place real protections so Texans can have a seat at the table to decide if and how data centers come into their communities.”

“When the companies being regulated are cheering for the rules, you know the rules were written for them, not for Texans,” she said.

Rep. Hinojosa has been more forceful on the issue than other statewide candidates.

In the **US Senate** race, Republican nominee **Ken Paxton** completely dodged questions about data centers over the weekend. For his part, Democratic nominee **James Talarico** recently unveiled a plan similar to Abbott’s. When asked if his plan was basically “the Abbott

plan,” Rep. Talarico said he did not know what Abbott’s plan is but added he’s willing to work with anyone including Abbott to craft the right policy.

Google on Monday morning became the latest to offer full-throated support for Abbott’s directives to ERCOT and the PUC.

“We share Gov. Abbott’s commitment to ensure data centers are developed the right way and support high standards for data center providers — which includes paying for the energy and infrastructure needed to power data center growth, and demonstrating grid reliability, water stewardship, and community transparency,” a spokesperson for Google said in a written statement provided to **Quorum Report**. “Last year, Google announced a \$40 billion investment in Texas through 2027 as part of a long-term commitment to invest in the state’s infrastructure, energy, jobs, skilling, and R&D. We are confident that Google aligns with the audit requirements set by the Governor, and we look forward to working closely with the Governor’s office, PUC, and ERCOT.”

A source close to Google said the company in Texas is creating jobs, working to protect natural resources, and that on jobs, protecting resources, and paying their own way:

"We today have more than 3,000 employees in the state, making it one of the largest states in the U.S. in terms of total number of Google employees. Our investment supports a significant, Texas-based supply chain, with billions of dollars of equipment and services from some of the state’s largest manufacturers, energy producers, and construction companies."

In addition to launching a \$10 million **Texas Water Impact Fund** in June, the company’s data center sites also use “air-cooled, closed-loop systems to minimize water use, in line with our commitment to be responsible stewards of our water usage,” the source said.

They also noted the company’s facilities contribute to local tax bases, increasing overall budgets for schools, police, fire, and more.

Google’s push came after **Open AI** sent a letter [to Abbott’s office](#) voicing support as well.

By Scott Braddock

