South Shore Audubon Society
Post Office Box Thirty-One
Freeport, New York 11520
http://ssaudubon.org

Comment on Case 26-E-0045: Proceeding on Motion of the Commission to Address Interconnection Reforms for Large Loads

Dear Governor Hochul and Chair Christian,

This comment for the docket of PSC Case 26-E-0045 is made on behalf of the South Shore Audubon Society. The SSAS is a chapter of the National Audubon Society representing approximately 1200 members on Long Island. Our mission is to promote environmental education; conduct research pertaining to local bird populations, wildlife and habitat; and to preserve and restore our environment, through responsible activism, for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

We urge you to stop the rush to build data centers in New York and devote the time and resources necessary to fully access their risks and consider public concerns about these costly and dangerous facilities. This includes extending of the public comment period for the Draft Scope for the Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) related to Executive Order 62.

The rapid growth of AI--impacting our electrical grid, energy costs, the environment and local communities--necessitates a careful, full process for evaluation of proposed data center development, a process that should not be rushed. The scoping document should be as wide-ranging as necessary so that costly and harmful mistakes are avoided. We recommend that the comment period for scoping document be at least 90 days and include both online and in-person public hearings.

Additionally, there are serious problems with the scoping document. It unwisely leaves out the option for maintaining the current moratorium on data centers. Extending or expanding the moratorium would give New York State time to properly study the possible impacts of data centers on our environment, health, and communities. Possible impacts on our state's water supply from PFAS (forever chemicals) used by data centers should also be carefully and fully studied, along with noise and light pollution effects on health.

SSAS supports the Responsible Data Center Development Act (S10642/A11560). This act, which passed both houses of the State Legislature with overwhelming bipartisan support, is a clear mandate from New Yorkers for creating strong safeguards against the rapid expansion of hyperscale data centers. We urge Governor Hochul to sign that important bill, thereby honoring the will of the people, in opposition to corporate interests.

Therefore, in summary, we urge you to extend the public comment period, expand the scope of the GEIS, and sign the Responsible Data Center Development Act.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jim Brown
Conservation Co-Chair
South Shore Audubon Society

October 30, 2026