

Colleagues, I appreciate all of the bipartisan support for the Ratepayer Protection Act and a lot of the thoughtful comments during the discussion on the bill today. Because electric bills for hardworking Americans are sky high. Just over the past year and a half, they're up on average over 18%.

Folks back home in Florida are really grappling with skyrocketing electric bills, and now we have these huge hyperscale data centers that could send bills soaring even higher unless we act. That's why I'm leading the Ratepayer Protection Act with my colleague Representative Evans of Colorado.

The act says that if a company wants to build a data center. The data center should pay for the power and upgrades that it needs. Not families, not farmers, not small businesses, not communities back home. When a large data center comes online, it can trigger massive upgrades—new power plants, transmission lines, local transformers—and those costs can be passed on to all rate payers.

That's not fair. Our neighbors should not be stuck paying for the energy infrastructure for the wealthiest companies in the world. The Ratepayer Protection Act says that the data center pays for its own upgrades, not the rest of us. This is about fairness. It's about making sure that when a data center corporation demands more electricity, they don't pass the cost on to people who already struggle with higher bills. It's about protecting our neighbors from hidden rate hikes and ensuring that the benefits of AI and innovation are shared by all, not just the corporations and the big tech companies.

Yes, we are racing to lead the world in AI, but that race shouldn't come on the backs of families and small businesses. Instead, the benefits of AI and more affordable energy should reach everyone. That is what the Ratepayer Protection Act does—makes sure that our grid serves everyone and that the companies who benefit pay their fair share.

Now, many states are already acting here. Let me highlight a few of them:

- Virginia has established a tariff requiring data centers to cover 85% of new transmission and distribution capacity costs.
- Minnesota requires data centers to pay into an energy conservation and weatherization fund to benefit working class rate payers.
- Kansas incentivizes data centers to participate in demand response to reduce peak demand.

And back home in Florida, at least 20 counties and municipalities have passed or discussed a moratorium, but Florida state law now regulates data center energy and water use. These actions are still allowed, and even encouraged under this bill.

I heard Representative McClellan from Virginia loud and clear too. A lot of these data centers can be powered by cleaner, cheaper energy. There's a massive amount of clean, affordable energy waiting to come onto the grid. And Congresswoman Fedorchak highlighted the problem with interconnection. We should be working together now to

unleash a lot of these clean energy resources that would help lower, put pressure on lowering electric bills.

I hope that this bipartisan bill can help us chart a course there, too. Otherwise, we're going to continue to have this conflagration as we try to lead the world in AI. The call on power exceeds what we have, and we have the technological tools to do this.

I am confident in the United States of America that we can work on upgrading the grid and bringing a lot of these cleaner, cheaper resources to bear. We have a partnership with a lot of innovative companies, forward-looking regulators. We can use this opportunity to build a modern energy system that works for everyone.

Our neighbors back home are counting on us to lower their electric bills and make life more affordable, and this bipartisan bill is an important first step, but let's keep going to lower energy bills and ensure that we have a modern grid to serve everyone.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I urge a yes vote on H.R. 9340. Thank you.