



From: Blue Rose Research

Date: February 20, 2026

Re: NEW POLLING: Research on AI Data Centers, Costs, and Pollution

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Climate Power has partnered with Blue Rose Research in order to understand voters' feelings toward the rise of data centers in the US and in their communities, fueled by the AI boom.

Voters are broadly aware of AI data centers at the national level, but they tend to be less aware of data centers being built in their own communities. While voters expect data centers to be built regardless of community opposition, they are grappling with concerns over how these facilities are built and what impact they will have on costs, pollution, and quality of life. This research suggests that how these data centers are powered plays a key role in how they are perceived, with the usage of renewable energy dramatically increasing support.

### **Key findings:**

**Two-thirds of voters have heard at least a little about the construction of new data centers.** Notably, just 45% have heard about the construction of data centers in their communities.

**In general, voters do not support the construction of data centers in areas where people live.**

- A 52% majority say they are opposed to such construction altogether, while just 16% say they support the building of data centers near communities, including their own.
- Voters are especially **concerned about the impact of data centers on increased utility costs and energy consumption**: asked to select the more concerning issue in randomized head-to-head matchups against various data center-related issues, utility costs were selected 64% of the time, while energy consumption was selected 59% of the time.

**Most voters also expect their local communities to oppose the construction of data centers, despite limited local awareness.**

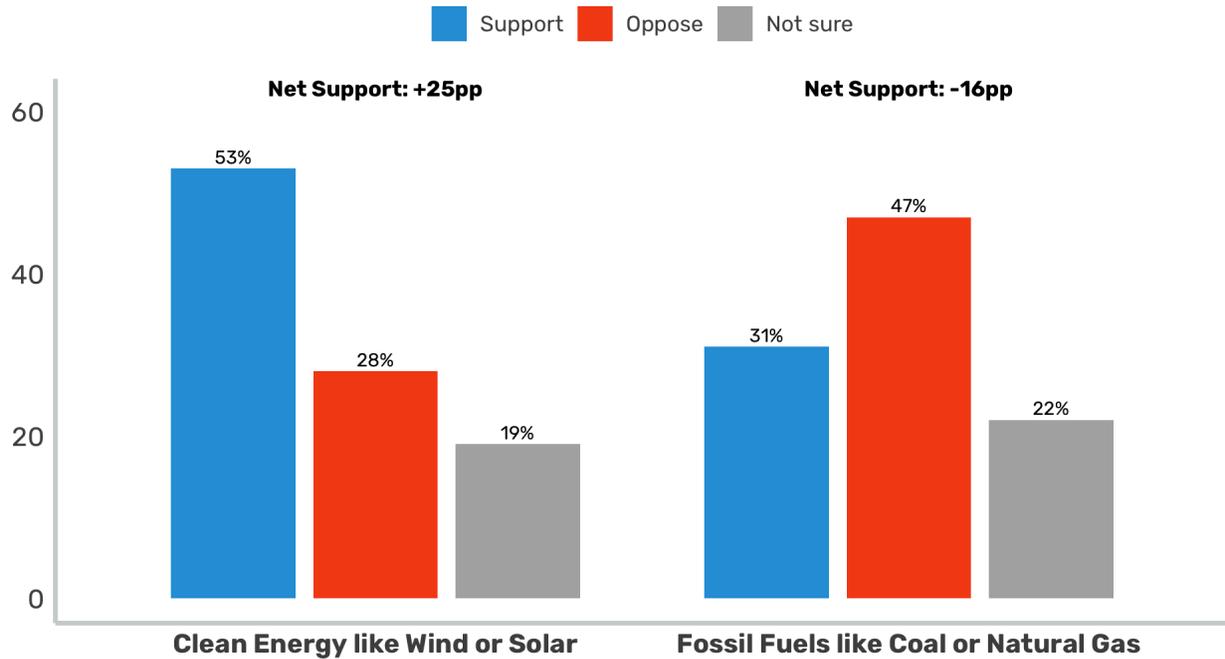
- 48% of voters say the burdens of data centers on communities outweigh the benefits, compared to just 22% who say the benefits outweigh the downsides.
- A 55% majority agree that "data centers will be built regardless of input from local communities," compared to just 27% who believe that local communities will have a say in their construction.

**The way in which these data centers are powered is a difference-maker - while overall support is underwater, voters support data centers powered by clean energy and strongly oppose those powered by fossil fuels.**

- Voters' main concerns with respect to data centers revolve around higher utility costs and power outages, with these issues ranking as the most selected concerns in head-to-head matchups with other data center-related concerns.
- When asked whether they support the construction of **data centers powered by fossil fuels, voters opposed by a 16-point margin**.
- However, when asked about **data centers powered by clean energy, voters supported their construction by a +25-point margin**.



## If an AI data center were built near your community and powered primarily by [energy source], would you support or oppose it?



### Voters are much more likely to trust their governor to protect their communities from data centers compared to the federal government.

- Asked to select who they would trust more to protect communities from the potential negative impacts of data centers, voters selected “Your Governor” in 66% of randomized head-to-head matchups. This is compared to Democrats in Congress (48%), the Trump administration (44%) and Republicans in Congress (43%).

### Methodology

This research was conducted via web surveys between January 30 - February 3, 2026. 5,428 respondents were interviewed, and results were weighted to the national electorate. The margin of error for this poll is  $\pm 1.3$ pp.