



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

September 21, 2026

Ms. Kelly Keel
Executive Director
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, Texas 78711-3087

Dear Executive Director Keel:

With this letter I am directing the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to halt all permits sought by data centers.

As you know, I directed the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) to thoroughly audit all data centers undergoing ERCOT's interconnection process to ensure their development does not compromise the reliability of the Texas electric grid and protects Texans' natural resources. I also directed the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to compel data centers to comply with water use reporting requirements and to impose legal consequences for past and future failure to comply with state law. Additionally, I directed TWDB to partner with ERCOT on its upcoming audit of data centers to seek additional water use information. The goal is to put Texans first. Through this process, the PUC, ERCOT, and TWDB will determine the impact of data centers upon grid reliability and security, and upon the water resources needed by our communities.

Because the information sought by the PUC, ERCOT, and TWDB is necessary to make informed decisions by each of those agencies, no other state agency shall move forward with regulatory approvals related to data centers until this information is acquired. Therefore, I direct the TCEQ to pause the issuance of all permits related to data center projects until ERCOT completes its review.

This action is consistent with my whole-of-government approach to ensure Texans' natural resources and way of life are protected. Data center projects must cover all electrical infrastructure costs, result in lower residential electrical bills, and complete the ERCOT and TWDB audits. Further, data centers must not use water needed by local communities, must report electricity and water usage, and must abide by setback requirements that will protect the communities in which they operate. Finally, I will work with the Legislature to eliminate any financial incentives for data centers. TCEQ will play a vital role once these laws are enacted. I am also engaging your

Executive Director Keel

September 21, 2026

Page 2

agency now, before these additional safeguards are codified, to protect Texans and our natural water resources.

As ERCOT and TWDB conduct their audits, TCEQ must similarly ensure that its permitting decisions align with my directives. This process will ensure that TCEQ has sufficient information, including information gained from pending audits, and time to thoroughly review all proposed permits to make fully informed permitting decisions.

TCEQ shall provide an update to my office on its compliance with my directive by Monday, October 19, 2026.

Thank you for your continued service to Texas and your work to protect our state's natural resources and communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Abbott", with a stylized, cursive script.

Greg Abbott
Governor