FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 10, 2026

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Ohio Data Center Industry Contributed $9.1 Billion to State GDP in 2025, New Ohio Chamber Study Finds

Data centers supported approximately 69,600 jobs across Ohio in 2025, with 14,257 direct industry payroll jobs averaging annual wages and benefits of $147,700

About $109 billion in construction and equipment spending from 2025 through 2030 would support at least 257,100 job-years and $20.1 billion in wages and benefits

Property taxes remain local - $96.50 of every $100 paid stays with local governments; $3.50 returns to taxpayers as lower bills, and about $53 goes to school districts

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Ohio's data center industry contributed approximately $9.1 billion to the state's gross domestic product in 2025, supporting nearly 69,600 jobs through ongoing operations, construction and related economic activity, according to a new study commissioned by the Ohio Chamber of Commerce Research Foundation.

"Data centers represent a significant economic development opportunity for Ohio, bringing investment, jobs and new opportunities for businesses across the state," said Ohio Chamber President and CEO Steve Stivers. "As this industry continues to grow, it's important that policymakers and local communities have reliable information to help them make informed decisions and ensure this investment can best support Ohioans. This research provides a valuable foundation for understanding the opportunities, weighing the policy considerations and ensuring communities are positioned to benefit from responsible development."

The State of Ohio Data Centers in 2026: Economic Contribution, Tax Policy, and Community Benefits was prepared by SRC EvalMetrics, an Ohio-based economic consulting firm. The report examines the industry's economic contributions, the cost and effectiveness of Ohio's sales and

use tax exemption, local property tax implications and opportunities for communities to negotiate benefits from data center development.

Among the study's key findings:

- **Significant economic contribution:** Data center operations supported approximately 69,600 Ohio jobs in 2025, including 43,500 data center operations jobs. Construction and equipment spending supported an additional 26,145 jobs. Approximately 14,257 direct industry employees earned an average of approximately $147,700 annually in wages and benefits.

- **Continued investment:** The study estimates that approximately $109 billion in construction and equipment spending from 2025 through 2030 could support 257,100 job-years of work across Ohio. Ongoing operating employment could reach approximately 61,500 jobs by 2030 under the study's central scenario.

- **Fiscal ROI and Tax Policy:** While Ohio's sales and use tax exemption for data center equipment accounted for an estimated $1.57 billion in forgone revenue in 2025, this incentive structure serves as a catalyst for expanding the broader tax base. Building on the industry's demonstrated track record of delivering a 2.1:1 tax return on investment and a $2.71 billion net fiscal surplus, the study evaluates the specific capital investment thresholds required to offset upfront costs.

- **Local property taxes and community benefits:**The study examines how data center property taxes are distributed under Ohio law and outlines ways communities can negotiate agreements addressing infrastructure, energy, water, noise, workforce opportunities and local purchasing.

The report finds that under current Ohio law, approximately 96.5% of property taxes paid by a hypothetical $10 billion data center would remain with local governments as new revenue, with the remainder returning to existing taxpayers through lower bills. The actual distribution can vary depending on local tax abatements and other incentives.

The study also emphasizes the importance of consistent public reporting on investment, employment, incentive costs and community agreement compliance to help policymakers and residents better evaluate the industry's impact.

The report was led by Saurav Roychoudhury, Ph.D., president of SRC EvalMetrics and professor of finance and economics at Capital University. Justin M. Ross, Ph.D., professor of public finance and economics at Indiana University, contributed the property tax analysis. Amanda Woodrum of ReImagine Appalachia contributed the community benefits framework.

The full report is available here.

The Ohio Chamber is the state's leading business advocate and represents thousands of companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.

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