

VERONICA ESCOBAR  
16TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION,  
VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

WASHINGTON D.C. OFFICE:  
2448 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-4831

EL PASO OFFICE:  
221 N. KANSAS STREET, SUITE 1500  
EL PASO, TX 79901  
(915) 541-1400

<http://escobar.house.gov>

NEW DEMOCRAT COALITION  
CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS  
CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS  
DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CAUCUS

The Honorable Daniel P. Driscoll  
Secretary of the Army  
U.S. Department of the Army  
1600 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-1600

May 21, 2026

Dear Secretary Driscoll,

I write regarding the proposed Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) data center project at Fort Bliss and the significant concerns that continue to be raised by El Pasoans about the project's scope, location, environmental impacts, infrastructure demands, and security implications.

As you know, Fort Bliss and El Paso share a long and proud history. I have consistently worked to support Fort Bliss, its service members, and its mission because the installation is vital for our national security and local economy. Precisely because the relationship is so important, I am concerned that the Army risks undermining community trust if residents come to view this process as dismissive of legitimate local concerns regarding the project's location and long-term impacts.

I appreciate that the Army and Carlyle Group have engaged with the El Paso community, including meetings with my office and a public listening session, and I recognize the Army's stated commitment to continued outreach. However, engagement cannot substitute for transparency and public input if core project decisions have already been made. At this stage, substantial questions remain unanswered while the project appears to be advancing rapidly toward major construction and environmental target deadlines. Such accelerated timelines effectively lock the public out of real participation.

Based on information shared in recent discussions, the Army expects to move into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process almost immediately following the signing of the term sheet, with completion of environmental review anticipated before the end of this calendar year. For a project of this scale and consequence, I am concerned that such a compressed timeline will leave insufficient room for rigorous environmental review and meaningful public engagement, regardless of the land choice. Moreover, key project details surrounding energy, water, infrastructure, and mitigation measures continue to be characterized as still being in flux or too preliminary to discuss specifically. However, a meaningful NEPA review would require many of these elements to be substantially developed. As such, I urge the Army to provide more transparency regarding the project's anticipated footprint, resource demands, and impacts before proceeding further.

El Pasoans deserve clear answers regarding the project's anticipated impacts on local energy infrastructure, water resources, the environment, and overall quality of life. The project has been discussed at hyperscale levels approaching 2.5 gigawatts, yet critical questions remain unresolved on energy sourcing, grid impacts, infrastructure upgrades, and whether local ratepayers could absorb indirect costs associated with the project. While I acknowledge references have been made to "behind-the-meter" solutions, the public has not been provided with detailed projections or enforceable commitments to allow the community to assess the project's impact.

These concerns are especially acute in El Paso, which is already facing prolonged drought conditions, extreme heat, poor air quality, and severe water stress. Residents living near the proposed site should not be asked to absorb more environmental and quality-of-life burdens without clear demonstration that every reasonable mitigation measure and alternative location have been fully evaluated.

I remain particularly concerned about the proposed location of the facility adjacent to the Fort Bliss fenceline and neighboring residential communities. During recent discussions, Army representatives suggested alternative locations farther inward on the base were not viable because they could interfere with Army training and testing operations. Given that Fort Bliss encompasses a land area larger than the State of Rhode Island, including significant undeveloped areas, I find it difficult to accept that no viable alternative locations exist. Moreover, a project of this scale, including its associated power generation and supporting infrastructure, will almost certainly occupy most of the proposed site. As such, claims that the facility can be set back within the parcel to sufficiently minimize impacts on nearby neighborhoods are difficult to reconcile without far greater specificity and supporting analysis. Operational convenience should not be prioritized over impacts to surrounding neighborhoods and the broader El Paso community. Accordingly, I strongly urge the Army and Carlyle Group to re-evaluate the proposed location and, at minimum, consider relocating the facility farther from residential areas.

I also have serious concerns regarding the physical security posture of the proposed facility. The Department of Defense has repeatedly emphasized the strategic importance of advanced computing infrastructure for future military readiness and artificial intelligence integration, yet Army representatives indicated anti-terrorism and force protection assessments have not yet been completed. As threats to critical infrastructure continue to evolve nationwide, the placement of strategically significant infrastructure directly adjacent to the Fort Bliss fenceline warrants far greater scrutiny. Recent attacks on domestic energy infrastructure have demonstrated real vulnerabilities facing critical facilities across the country. The safety of both the Fort Bliss and El Paso communities must remain paramount, and it is essential the Army fully evaluate whether the proposed site creates unnecessary risks and soft-target vulnerabilities. As such, I request a classified briefing regarding the assessed threats, vulnerabilities, and planned mitigation measures associated with the proposed facility.

El Pasoans deserve a process that is transparent, thoughtful, and responsive to legitimate public scrutiny before irreversible decisions are made. I urge the Army and Carlyle Group to slow this process, provide greater transparency, and seriously reconsider the proposed location of the facility.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Veronica Escobar  
Member of Congress