

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

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

May 8, 2026

Chair Bryan Morris
El Paso Water Public Service Board
6400 Boeing Drive
El Paso, TX 79925

Dear Chair Morris and the esteemed members of the Public Service Board,

Thank you for serving our community and the leadership you have provided in challenging times. When the City of El Paso established the Public Service Board (PSB) in 1952, their decision to create a governing body independent of politics gave you and your predecessors the ability to focus squarely on the management and control of our community's water and wastewater. That visionary decision has helped protect our most precious resource: water. I'm writing to ask that the PSB swiftly act to provide safeguards for our community as we see AI Data Centers proliferate in our region.

For decades, El Paso Water has led the way in innovation and aggressive conservation efforts and has rightfully put in place common-sense policies that El Pasoans have supported and honored. Since 1991, the majority of El Pasoans have followed the mandatory water restrictions set in place by El Paso Water and its Public Service Board. El Paso Water has hastened changes in behavior by running several different educational campaigns, like the Home Water Use Calculator, that help residents estimate their household water usage and identify opportunities to conserve water. El Pasoans have complied with these limitations, including replacing water-thirsty lawns with xeriscaping and watering outdoors on limited days of the week. We've celebrated our water reduction and – thanks to the innovation at EP Water – our community has been at the forefront of inland desalination and wastewater reuse.

Those of us who have water and wastewater connections are the fortunate ones. In El Paso County, there are still 1,878 individuals who live in *colonias* and cannot open their faucet for water, and without wastewater connections, must deal with septic tanks, many of which routinely fail. In the wealthiest country in the world, America still has residents who must truck in the water they use to cook, drink, shower and do laundry. I'm proud to work with El Paso Water to deliver as many resources as possible to help connect these citizens to water and wastewater, and I am



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grateful as well as to our partners at the County and our state delegation, who do everything possible to meet the water and wastewater needs of our shared constituents. Without EP Water's dedication to these water and wastewater hookups, countless El Pasoans would not have had access to water. But we all still have much more work to do to close the gaps that remain.

An additional challenge we face is that El Paso is one of the fastest warming communities in the country, and as our summers get hotter, persistent drought conditions will continue to require EP Water to invest in innovative ways to diversify our water supply. Recent years in El Paso have ranked among the warmest on record, an unsettling trend and a danger we must recognize.¹ While EP Water has been at the cutting edge of new technologies, alternative water supplies are increasingly costly, and residents are already feeling the strain on their pocketbooks.

Adding multiple large volume industrial water users, specifically multiple data centers, threatens to strain our already limited water supply. Given the sacrifices El Pasoans have been willing to make and the increases in utility bills over time, it's no wonder El Pasoans are deeply alarmed. It's crucial that the PSB and EP Water create safeguards that protect ratepayers and users from the unexpected and significant demands and water usage that come with data centers.

As a federal legislator, I've joined my colleagues in legislation that creates federal guardrails on data centers to protect our communities. However, we need a whole-of-government approach on this issue, especially given how quickly data centers are being constructed, and the limited information and consultation they are providing our residents.

As the PSB reviews EP Water's plans to provide water for data centers in El Paso County, I respectfully suggest the PSB consider the following:

- Contractually obligating all AI data centers to use the "closed loop" liquid cooling system for cooling that recycles water;
- Clear metering that can be reported regularly to the PSB;
- Transparency and reporting requirements that would ensure real-time reporting to the community and full public disclosure of usage;

¹ ["El Paso records its third-warmest year ever in 2025 as rising heat continues" El Paso Matters. Moore, Robert. January 1, 2026.](#)

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- Ensuring commercial users like AI Data Centers are contractually obligated to subsidize infrastructure improvements rather than shifting the cost to residential ratepayers;
- Protections for the community during periods of drought, prioritizing residential and existing commercial users over AI Data Center users;
- A separate rate structure for data centers, including system development fees, charging for peak capacity, and up-front capital contributions; and
- Ensuring the investment that has been promised by Meta (and any other data center) is made and is appropriately deployed to sustainability.

Protecting El Pasoan is a shared obligation and a priority of mine as well, so please let me know if and how my team and I can be helpful in this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Veronica Escobar".

Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress