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Chair Jones, Vice-Chair Rigby and Councilmembers,

Thank you for considering my nomination as member of the temporary task force set up pursuant to Council Bill 31. Special thanks to Councilmember Jung for nominating me.

I'll make this brief. I spent my career mostly working on environmental policy. Because I'm retired and have interest and some time on my hands, I have spent nearly every day of the past eight months thinking about the energy and water use of large data centers.

After the news of the past couple of weeks, if you're not concerned about implications of AI, you're not paying attention. When the task force has its required hearing, I'm sure it will hear from worried residents who believe that we need to try to slow down or stop AI by stopping data centers. It may not be the best hook, but for scared people it may be the only hook they have.

At some point a future Council may have to deal with this. But that's not the task that you gave the task force. The task force's job is specifically to "to develop a definition of 'Data Center' for the Zoning Regulations and recommend best practices" in eight enumerated areas. This technical work is critically important right now. Most of Maryland's 25 counties and independent cities are searching for guidance on environmental, noise, and other data center parameters, particularly since the Governor's position seems to be to let localities decide. The accomplished people who have been nominated for this role can provide a valuable public service not only to this county, but to many others.

If I am confirmed for task force membership, I will work hard and collaboratively with my colleagues to produce the best possible report to the Department of Planning and Zoning and to the Council. And Mr. Yungman, I will do my best to help get that report done before the deadline.

Thank you again for considering my nomination.

