US Data Center Daily Briefing

April 05, 2026

KEY THEMES

- Maine pauses new 20MW+ data centers until Nov 2027
- Granholm: 50–150GW U.S. capacity need for data centers
- Bipartisan U.S. bill to harden Taiwan undersea cables
- Imperial Valley ~75-acre AI data center sparks $1m+ lawsuit

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Maine just moved to hit the brakes on big data centers — a statewide pause on new projects **20MW and up** until **November 2027**. That's not a symbolic gesture: it's a direct shot at the "build first, figure out grid impacts later" playbook, and it lands in the middle of a widening federal argument about whether data centers should pay more for the power system they're straining. The subtext is clear: the industry's social licence is no longer assumed, even in places that want investment.

The Big Stories

Maine moves to pause new large-scale data center construction after lawmakers passed a bill stopping new data center projects of **20MW+** until **Nov 2027**, explicitly to study impacts on electricity costs and the grid. The report notes this is happening alongside federal political heat — President Trump urging tech firms to pay more, and a proposed national pause from Sanders and Ocasio-Cortez — with data points like **U.S. data centers consuming ~183 TWh in 2024** adding fuel. This matters because it's a template other states can copy: if a pause becomes a "normal" policy tool, site selection starts looking less like real estate and more like political risk management.

U.S. lawmakers introduce bill to protect Taiwan's undersea cables, with a bipartisan House proposal focused on resilience measures like advanced sensors, real-time intelligence, allied capacity-building, and sanctions authority for saboteurs. A Senate companion bill from Senators John Curtis and Jacky Rosen already cleared the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in January. For digital infrastructure investors, the important part is that undersea cables are being treated less like telecom plumbing and more like critical national security assets — which usually brings both funding and tighter rules.

Granholm on data centers, clean energy, and community oversight put a hard number on the scale of the build-out: former U.S. Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm estimated **50–150GW**

of additional U.S. capacity needs tied to data centers and electrification. She argued data centers should come with community benefits, long-term commitments, clean power (on-site or contracted), and flexible loads, pointing to Google's Van Buren Township project as an example, and noted recent additions have been ~**92–94% renewables**. The signal here is that "permitability" is now part of the technical spec: flexibility and credible clean power aren't nice-to-haves if you want to avoid the kind of backlash that leads to pauses like Maine's.

Developer sues activists over Imperial Valley AI data center shows how ugly local fights are getting. Imperial Valley Computer Manufacturing, LLC and managing member Sebastian Rucci filed a verified complaint (April 1, 2026) alleging defamation and related claims tied to opposition to a proposed **~75-acre hyperscale AI data center** in Imperial County, seeking injunctive relief and **damages exceeding $1 million**. The complaint claims a coordinated December 2025 social media campaign, harassment, and an "extortion-style" pattern of seeking multimillion-dollar community-benefit settlements (citing a **$2.75 million/year** demand in a separate lithium project). Whether or not the allegations stick, the trend is the story: community-benefit negotiations are turning into legal battlefields, and project timelines will start carrying a litigation premium.

Behind the Headlines

Goldman Sachs Paris Offices Under Police Surveillance After Attack is a reminder that "physical security" is back in the risk register for corporate infrastructure — even in core European capitals. Goldman's Paris office went under police surveillance with remote work allowed after a failed explosive attack on a Bank of America Paris office and threats linked to a pro-Iran group. In the same item, the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation announced a **$20 billion reinsurance program** for oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz, while major Gulf events (WEF and F1) were postponed/cancelled amid the US-Israel–Iran conflict. Put together, it's the same message across office occupancy, energy logistics, and regional stability: geopolitical shocks don't just move markets — they change operating assumptions and continuity planning.

Nature is Nonpartisan Builds Bipartisan Movement for Conservation and Clean Energy looks like "soft" news until you notice where it's aimed: the local politics of clean power build-out in places absorbing data center load. Benji Backer's effort is explicitly trying to build a culturally relevant, nonpartisan conservation movement, while Skyler Zunk's Energy Right is educating rural Virginia on community solar and agrovoltaics — and directly engaging with **growing demand from data centers in Northern Virginia**. This matters because power siting is becoming a community narrative fight, not just an interconnection queue fight. If Northern

Virginia is the archetype of concentrated load growth, the next constraint may be less about how fast you can build — and more about how convincingly you can explain why you should.

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