US Data Center Daily Briefing

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KEY THEMES

- Utah advances data center water-use disclosure requirement
- Utah $30m Great Salt Lake restoration and $60m rescue settlement
- Taiwan defense budget deadlock; Jason Hsu flags undersea cable security

Utah just shoved a sensitive topic into the daylight: lawmakers advanced a requirement for data centers to disclose water use, in the middle of a broader push to triage the Great Salt Lake crisis and other water pressures (Utah legislature acts on Great Salt Lake and environment). That's not a flashy megawatt headline, but it's the kind of policy move that can quietly reshape site selection, community relations, and permitting timelines. Pair it with today's reminder about undersea cable security in Taiwan, and you get a clear theme: critical digital infrastructure is being pulled deeper into the politics of scarcity and security.

The Big Stories

Utah's Legislature approved $30 million to help restore the Great Salt Lake and set in motion a $60 million funding outcome for lake rescue tied to a land-trade settlement connected to the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge. In the same sweep of water- and environment-related bills, lawmakers also advanced a requirement for data centers to disclose water use (after reconsideration), and earmarked $1 million for Colorado River litigation. The headline for investors isn't the exact dollar line-items — it's the direction of travel: environmental and water accounting is becoming a legislative object, not just a local negotiation. If this disclosure requirement sticks, it's an early template other stressed basins can copy, and it gives communities a clearer hook to demand operational constraints or mitigation commitments.

Behind the Headlines

In Taiwan, former Kuomintang legislator Jason Hsu — now a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute — said in an interview that Taiwan's special defense budget remains deadlocked, while urging greater attention to undersea cable security (Taiwan defense budget deadlock and undersea cable security). The interesting part here is the coupling: budget deadlock doesn't just slow procurement; it can also delay the less-visible investments that keep the internet physically resilient. Undersea cable security tends to be everyone's "of course it

matters” topic right up until a disruption forces emergency workarounds and public blame-sharing. For data centre and cloud operators, this is a reminder that the connectivity layer — especially around geopolitically sensitive chokepoints — is increasingly a national security conversation, not a purely commercial one.

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