PROXIMITY TO DATA CENTERS PREDICTS CHANGES IN VOTER TURNOUT, ESPECIALLY AMONG INDEPENDENTS

Jeffrey L. Jensen,[1] **Daniel Karell,**[2,a] **and Cole Tanigawa-Lau**[1]

[1]Division of Social Science, New York University Abu Dhabi
[2]Department of Sociology and Institution for Social and Policy Studies, Yale University
[a] Corresponding author: Daniel Karell, daniel.karell@yale.edu

October 22, 2026

ABSTRACT

Although data centers have rapidly emerged as a political flashpoint, there is little systematic evidence to date on whether their arrival has electoral consequences. We link the precise locations of data centers in Virginia—which has the United States' largest concentration of such facilities—to voters' geocoded residential addresses and validated turnout histories, allowing us to compare individual-level changes in turnout between the state's 2021 and 2025 elections according to voters' proximity to operating data centers. Across two independently assembled measures of data-center openings, voters living near an active facility became more likely to vote in 2025. The estimated increase is approximately 0.4 to 0.6 percentage points among voters living within 2.5 to 5 kilometers of a facility. Estimates remain positive at farther distances, although they become less precise. We also find suggestive evidence that the increase in turnout is most concentrated among non-affiliated registered voters and in some regions with many facilities. These results offer insights for states with high numbers of data centers, like Ohio and Texas, and indicate that data-center development was already influencing political participation before the 2026 midterm elections.

***K*eywords** Data centers · Artificial intelligence · Turnout · Elections · Politics

1 Introduction

The United States is experiencing a growing and increasingly visible backlash to data centers, the physical infrastructure underpinning the rapid expansion of computing and artificial intelligence (AI). Residents living near data centers have organized protests (Holtermann 2026), voters have pushed states to adopt moratoria (Ashford 2026), and politicians have disavowed their previous support for data-center development (Goodman et al. 2026). Some media reports suggest that on the eve of the 2026 midterm elections, the backlash is upending political boundaries, uniting Americans with different partisan identities (Caldwell 2026; Goldmacher 2026; Macur 2026) and even causing these identities to shift (eco 2026). Yet the evidence for these kinds of widespread effects on Americans remains largely anecdotal, and, due primarily to the recently emerging interest in this issue, systematic studies of changes in individuals' political behavior are limited. While a growing literature has examined backlash to data centers through public attitudes (Heering & Voeten 2026; Peeroo & Wolf 2026; Rauh et al. 2026; Zhang et al. 2026) and institutional responses such as moratoria,

litigation, and regulatory restrictions, (Soares et al. 2024; Bommarito 2026; Miklian 2026; Kollar & Danielak 2026), few studies, if any, have conducted large-scale, individual-level analyses of whether data center development has electoral consequences.

We begin to fill this gap by examining how the operation of data centers influences voter turnout. We set our study in Virginia in 2025, an ideal setting for investigating this topic. Virginia is the state with the most data centers[1] and, due to its off-cycle electoral schedule, it is one of the few states that had important statewide elections in 2025 (*e.g.*, governor, state legislature). The 2025 Virginia elections were therefore among the first in which proximity to a data center varied meaningfully across voters while their operation was also widely salient, as candidates and community groups explicitly connected data center development to quality of life issues and local-government decisions before the election (Stevenson & Behr 2025).

Our analysis tests whether proximity to a data center in 2025 affected individual-level changes in turnout from 2021, the previous comparable election cycle. We link two independent inventories of facility locations and operation dates to the residential coordinates and validated turnout histories of all registered voters in the state. This enables an individual-panel design that compares the changes in turnout among registrants exposed to a nearby operating facility with the changes in turnout among unexposed but otherwise similar registrants. We code exposure using several distance radii, based on the expectation that data centers become less politically salient as the distance between a facility and a voter's residence increases. While the potential benefits of facilities to local tax bases are shared by all residents in a locality, the perceived costs of data centers are intensely local and decline with distance from their physical location: data centers occupy large plots of land, require large and reliable supplies of electricity, place demands on water and transportation systems, are visually unappealing, and perhaps, most importantly, generate noise, backup-generator emissions, and other similar adverse effects on the nearby quality of life.

Across both measures of data center locations, the opening of a nearby facility predicts an increase in turnout that becomes more precise as the distance shrinks. The most consistent estimates occur within 2.5 and 5 kilometers of a center, where the probability of an individual voting rises by roughly 0.4 to 0.6 percentage points. Estimates remain positive at broader distances but become less precise and are statistically indistinguishable from zero at around 15 kilometers from a center. We find no comparable evidence of data center operation being associated with greater turnout during Virginia's 2021 election, indicating that our estimates of 2025's turnout are not the result of an extant trend in rising turnout.

We also examine whether the relationship between data center exposure and turnout varies by registered voters' partisanship and the regional volume of facilities. We find that facilities' effects are most strongly concentrated among non-affiliated voters, and in some, but not only, regions with many facilities. These findings extend the literature on place-based voter mobilization rooted in discrete events and explicit policy changes to the arrival of computing

[1] Several data center-tracking projects report that Virginia has the highest number. See, for example, `https://www.pewresearch.org/chart/top-states-data-centers/` and `https://www.datacentermap.com/usa/` (both accessed in October 2026). See also (Kang 2026).

infrastructure (*e.g.*, Hazlett & Mildenberger 2020; Nuamah & Ogorzalek 2021; Ang & Tebes 2024; Hassell & Holbein 2025; Morris & Shoub 2024). They also provide evidence that data centers have already been influencing electoral participation before the 2026 midterm elections.

2 Newly Salient Issues and Turnout

Our examination of how a newly salient issue affects turnout builds on a large literature showing how shifts in the issues that organize political conflict, especially through party agenda setting, can reshape elections (*e.g.*, Schattschneider 1960; Riker 1986; Carmines & Stimson 1989). More specifically to turnout, heightened issue salience can affect voters' behavior by raising the perceived stakes of an election or providing campaigns and political organizations with compelling mobilizing appeals (Rosenstone & Hansen 1993; Franklin 2004; Lacey 2005; Biggers 2011; Amos & Middlewood 2024; Sirin & Villalobos 2024).[2] Of particular relevance to our research question and design is a recent literature on the electoral consequences of social trends outside of partisan politics (Dennison & Kriesi 2023), including geographically concentrated events that may independently mobilize voters. These events, such as place-based policy losses, wildfires, mass shootings, and police killings, can make public decisions salient, create a shared sense of place, and give residents a reason to become politically engaged, sometimes leading to an increase in various forms of political participation among directly exposed communities (Hazlett & Mildenberger 2020; Nuamah & Ogorzalek 2021; Ang & Tebes 2024; Morris & Shoub 2024; Hassell & Holbein 2025). Related research shows that citizens respond electorally to geographically targeted benefits and participate intensely in local land-use decisions (Bechtel & Hainmueller 2011; Einstein et al. 2019).

Recent, and extensive, media reporting suggests that the dynamics political scientists have observed in cases like natural disasters, state violence, and abrupt policy losses are now occurring with the establishment of data centers (Ashford 2026; Caldwell 2026; Goldmacher 2026; Holtermann 2026; Macur 2026). However, the rapidly growing scholarly research on data centers' impact on local politics has thus far focused on topics like residents' attitudes (Heering & Voeten 2026; Peeroo & Wolf 2026; Rauh et al. 2026; Zhang et al. 2026) and institutions' responses (Bommarito 2026; Miklian 2026; Kollar & Danielak 2026), rather than electoral consequences. We therefore examine whether data centers, like other locally visible events, mobilize voters by making previously diffuse concerns about energy, water, land use, local governance, and quality of life more politically salient.

3 Data Centers in Virginia

Virginia offers unique leverage for evaluating whether the activation of data centers are geographically concentrated, locally visible events that influence voter turnout. It hosts a large number of facilities—by some accounts, the most in the United States[3]—that may adversely affect some residents through increased construction traffic, noise and

[2] While most of this work finds a positive relationship between newly salient issues and turnout, some issues, especially when citizens perceive little ability to affect them, may depress turnout (Mutz 2002; Smith 2022).
[3] See footnote 1.

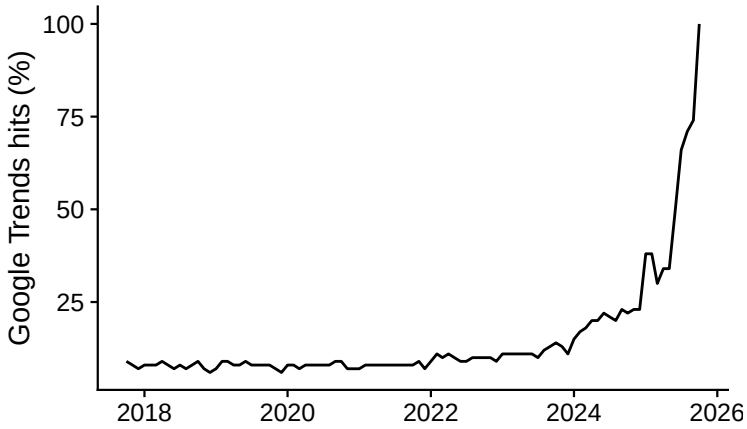


Figure 1: The Google search volume for data centers in Virginia between October 2017 and October 2025. The volume measure is interpreted relative to the overall peak that occurred within a given geography and during a given time period. In the case of this figure, the peak for searches in Virginia happened in October 2025.

pollution, visually unappealing altered landscapes, rising electricity demand, and disfavored permitting approvals and tax treatment, thereby motivating turnout. At the same time, residents may also perceive benefits through increased employment and local tax revenue, which can encourage them to vote to preserve these benefits.

Virginia also held comparable statewide elections in both 2021 and 2025 due to its due to its unusual off-cycle election schedule. These elections selected a governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, and the full House of Delegates, allowing us to compare voter turnout at similar points in the state electoral schedule, rather than, say, comparing a presidential election with an off-year contest (Virginia Department of Elections 2026). Importantly for our design, this period between 2021 and 2025 encompasses the emergence of data center development and operation as a highly salient issue for people in Virginia (Figure 1), including likely voters (Stevenson & Behr 2025).

4 Data

Our main analysis draws primarily on two variables: 1) whether an individual voted in Virginia's gubernatorial elections (2021 and 2025), and 2) whether the voter's residence falls within a specified radius of the nearest data center operating prior to the 2025 election.

We measure electoral participation using the L2 voter-file snapshots for Virginia from November 2021 and December 2025. The unit of analysis is the registered voter-election. The baseline election is the November 2021 general election and the outcome election is the November 2025 general election. Both were gubernatorial elections in which Virginians also elected, among other positions, the full House of Delegates. The 2025 L2 dataset contains 6,016,992 registered voters. Since we include only individuals who were registered in both 2021 and 2025, our sample is 4,787,522 individuals.

To measure data-center proximity, we use records of data centers activated in Virginia before November 4, 2025 from two providers, Aterio and Cleanview. Using two sources increases confidence in the findings because each provider's collection procedures may produce incomplete or systematically different facility coverage. If both datasets lead to similar results, this is evidence that the results are not an artifact of the data source, including its data collection techniques. This is especially the case when the collection techniques are relatively distinct, as is the case with Aterio and Cleanview. The former relies significantly on satellite imagery, supplemented by press releases, company websites, permits, and utility filings.[4] All of its records are manually validated by Aterio's analysts. Cleanview, meanwhile, prioritizes permits to identify data centers, particularly for Virginia, where it finds data centers based on the state's air permit database.[5] Data centers in Virginia that operate large backup generators must obtain an air permit from the Department of Environmental Quality. Cleanview supplements its records with information from other sources, like satellite imagery, company websites, utility filings, and assessor records, and its analysts also manually review its data entries. When aggregated to Virginian ZIP codes and the years 2022 through 2025, the two datasets' counts of data centers have a Pearson correlation of 0.94.

To calculate the distance between voters and facilities, we first restrict the Aterio data to centers activated before November 4, 2025, excluding facilities activated after the outcome election. The Cleanview dataset includes only the year in which each data center began operating, so we subset this database to comprise centers operating in 2025. Next, we compute the straight-line distance from each registered voter's 2025 residence to the nearest operating data center. Finally, we code treatment according to four distance radii: 2.5 kilometers, 5 kilometers, 10 kilometers, and 15 kilometers. Treatment is thus defined as being registered to vote at an address within 2.5, 5, 10, or 15 kilometers of a data center operating in 2025.

Counting only facilities that are the nearest facility to at least one treated registrant, the Aterio data contain 195, 200, 201, and 201 facilities at 2.5, 5, 10, and 15 kilometers, respectively; the Cleanview data contain 192, 196, 197, and 197.

5 Methods

We combine the geocoded data center and registered voter coordinates to create an individual-election panel for the 2021 and 2025 general elections in Virginia. Between these two elections, many people may have entered and exited the voter rolls. To guard against changes in the voter register, we restrict our analyses to the voters who appear in both the November 2021 and December 2025 registers. Our results thus do not capture effects data centers might have on mobilizing voter registration, only turnout.

Our estimation strategy follows a difference-in-differences design in a two-period, two-way fixed-effects model. We fit the following linear probability model:

[4] For details, see `https://knowledge.aterio.io/data-products/data-centers/our-modeling-approach/data-collection`, accessed October 2026.
[5] For details, see `https://cleanview.co/methodology/data-centers`, accessed October 2026.

$$Vote_{it} = \beta D_{it} + \alpha_i + \gamma_{dt} + \delta_{pt} + \varepsilon_{idpt}, \quad (1)$$

where $Vote$ is a dichotomous indicator of validated turnout for each registered Virginia voter i in election period t. The variable D represents the treatment, or being registered to vote at an address within a given radius of a data center. The coefficient β estimates the effect of proximity to a data center on a treated registrant's probability of voting in 2025 as the issue's salience rose between 2021 and 2025.

To account for time-invariant individual characteristics and spatially patterned differences between data-center siting and voter turnout, we include fixed effects for each registered voter (α_i), election-by-district-cell (γ_{dt}), and election-by-turnout-profile (δ_{pt}). The first fixed effect for individuals absorbs time-invarient individual heterogeneity. The second fixed effect interacts election year with overlapping administrative boundaries to restrict our turnout comparisons to be between registrants with nearly identical ballots. We determine these boundaries by using the combination of registrants' county, city, town, and state assembly district to assign each voter to one of 434 district cells. The third fixed effect compares voters with similar turnout patterns. It uses voter history profiles that we construct by combining registrants' turnout history across seven primary and general elections leading up to 2021, our baseline election year. This combination yields $2^7 = 128$ distinct bins. Interacting this turnout profile with election year as a fixed effect, δ_{pt}, forces our comparisons to be among registrants with identical turnout histories. Thus our identification assumption is that among people in the same district cell and pretreatment turnout profile, the registrants inside and outside of the data-center-exposure radius followed a parallel trend in 2021 and 2025 turnout. We estimate two-way clustered standard errors using each voter's county of registration and their nearest data center.

We next conduct a placebo analysis using the same treatment variables built from 2025 data center sites to predict prior changes in voter turnout. Given that data centers are a newly salient issue, and many were built recently, their proximity should not be associated with higher election turnout in 2021. This analysis thus tests for differential trends in our treated units' prior turnout.

We then estimate subgroup models to assess whether the relationship between proximity and turnout varies by inferred partisanship. Because Virginia does not include party registration in its public voter file, the L2 voter files for Virginia infer partisanship based on whether a registrant had previously voted in a partisan primary election. This method of coding partisanship labels 51% of registrants as Democratic and 30% as Republican, leaving 18% labeled Non-Partisan.[6] However, relying on participation in a primary means that the coding for partisanship is correlated with political activity and is most reliable for high-propensity, highly engaged voters. Fortunately, the individuals in our sample are relatively active voters, having maintained their registration from at least 2021 to 2025.

Finally, since data centers tend to be spatially concentrated, we explore possible heterogeneity in the effects over geography. We divide Virginia into eight regions, per University of Virginia's Cooper Center for Public Service (University

[6]By comparison, the 2024 Cooperative Election Study's Virginia sample (N = 1,612) reports 34% Democratic, 26% Republican, and 33% Independent (Schaffner et al. 2025).

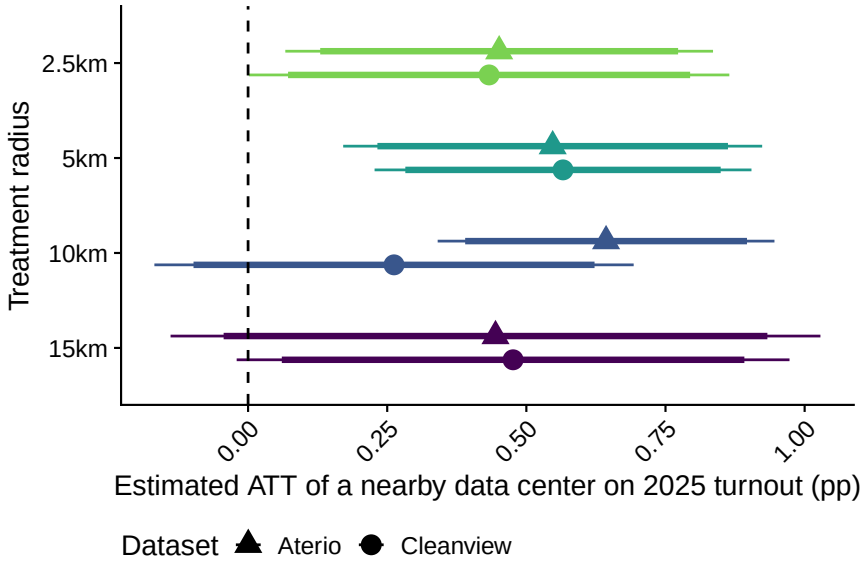


Figure 2: The establishment of data centers is associated with subsequent turnout among nearby registered voters. The horizontal axis reports the ATT as the percentage-point increase in the probability of voting in the 2025 election. Thick and thin bars mark the 90% and 95% confidence intervals, respectively.

of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service 2017). Within each region, we fit another set of party-specific models.[7] With so few counties per region, this analysis clusters standard errors by registrants' nearest data center only.

6 Results

Figure 2 reports the estimated average treatment effect on treated registrants (ATTs) at four distance thresholds, using each of the two sources of data center locations, Aterio and Cleanview. Across both measures, the point estimates are positive at every threshold. Within 2.5 kilometers of an operating facility, the probability of a registered voter turning out increases approximately 0.4 to 0.5 percentage points. Within 5 kilometers, the estimated increase is just over half a percentage point. The confidence intervals exclude zero at these closer distances, except for Cleanview's 2.5-kilometer estimate ($p = 0.051$). At 10 and 15 kilometers, the point estimates remain positive, but the confidence intervals widen. The strongest conclusion is therefore local: voters living within a few kilometers of an active facility became more likely to participate in 2025 than did comparable voters who were not exposed.[8]

The magnitude of our results is modest at the individual level but meaningful in aggregate. The average Virginia county with a data center has almost 50,000 people living within 5 kilometers of a data center. Our results suggest that data centers drove a 2025 turnout increase of almost 400 additional voters in such a county.[9] Because facilities and their

[7] Due to their sparse population and few data centers, three regions did not contain sufficient treated units for this analysis.
[8] The similarity of the short-distance estimates across two independently collected facility inventories suggests that it is unlikely that the result is an artifact of one provider's coverage or coding of activation.
[9] Using the 10-kilometer radius with Aterio's data, we estimate an additional 900 voters turned out due to data center proximity; Cleanview's data with a 10-kilometer radius yields a statistically insignificant 384 additional voters.

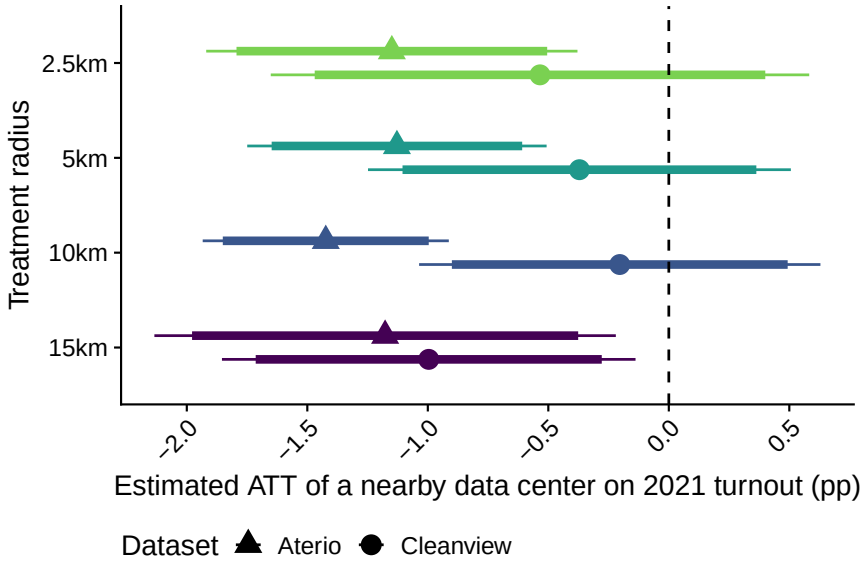


Figure 3: The estimated relationship between turnout in the 2021 election and the subsequent establishment of data centers is negative. The horizontal axis reports the ATT of future 2025 exposure and the probability of voting in the 2021 election, measured in percentage points. Thick and thin bars mark the 90% and 95% confidence intervals, respectively.

externalities are geographically concentrated, changes of this size may alter the composition of the electorate in local and state-legislative contests.

Figure 3 presents a placebo analysis relating our same treatment variables of data center exposure to election turnout in the prior election, 2021. Because data centers have only recently become politically salient, we would not expect to see the same positive turnout effect when analyzing changes in voter turnout from 2017 to 2021. Positive ATT estimates would indicate that data centers were merely sited in areas with an increasing voter turnout trend, and perhaps had no causal effect at all. Instead, Figure 3 reveals consistently negative estimates. Holding constant our fixed effects variables, we find that data centers were in fact sited in areas with a decreasing trend in electoral participation. This indicates that Figure 2's results are not due to extant increasing trends in turnout and, in fact, suggest that we may be underestimating the true effect of data centers on increasing turnout.

Figure 4 disaggregates the estimates by inferred partisanship, showing the results of models fit separately according to registrants' partisanship. This analysis assesses whether the participatory response crosses party lines or is concentrated among voters of one party. We find that the largest and most consistent effects are concentrated among voters without an inferred partisan affiliation. These results should be interpreted with care, however. As explained earlier, individuals' partisanship is inferred from prior partisan-primary participation because Virginia does not record party registration. Therefore, the dataset classifies politically active voters more reliably than less active voters. Fortunately, though, the people in our sample are relatively active voters, having maintained their registration from at least 2021 to 2025.

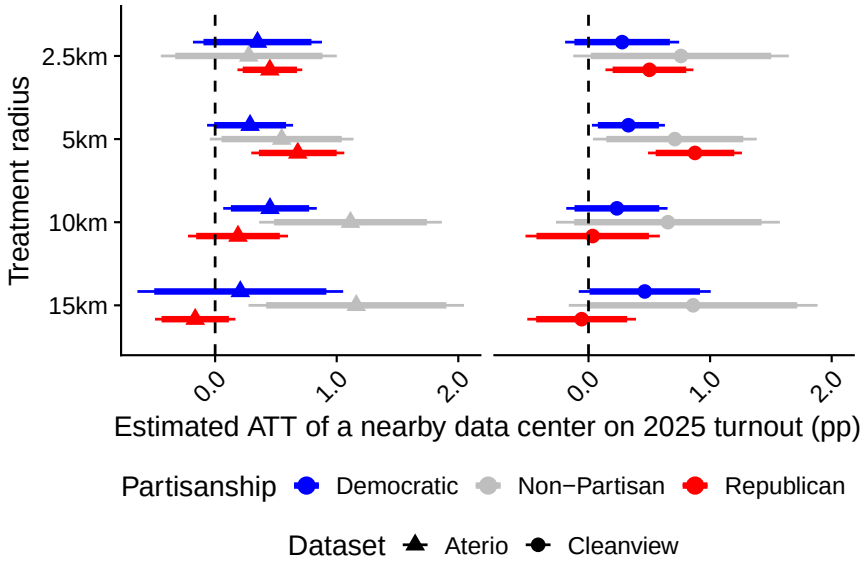


Figure 4: The estimated relationship between the establishment of data centers and turnout among nearby registered voters varies by partisanship and distance. The horizontal axis reports the ATT as the percentage-point increase in the probability of voting in the 2025 election. Thick and thin bars mark the 90% and 95% confidence intervals, respectively.

Figure 5 presents the results of another disaggregation, this time by geography. We divided Virginia into eight regions and for each region fit a separate set of within-party models.[10] Disaggregating by both party and region uncovers several interesting results. First, the point estimates for non-affiliated and Democratic registrants are larger and almost always positive, and generally higher in regions with many data centers. Republicans, on the other hand, exhibit a less consistent turnout response to centers. In two regions, the ATT estimates for Republicans are negative.

Curiously, we find the largest point estimates, for both Democrats and Non-Partisans, in the Shenandoah Valley. This region itself contains few data centers, but it is adjacent to the regions with the highest concentration of centers. We interpret this result cautiously since it does not align with the more common result that Democratic and Non-Partisan turnout is higher in regions with many facilities, and because only around six percent of the state's population (in 2020, it was 507,637) live in the Shenandoah region. Further research is needed to fully understand this finding.

7 Conclusion

Our results indicate that registered voters living near data centers operating between the 2021 and 2025 Virginia elections were more likely to vote in 2025 than otherwise similar voters who were not exposed. The relationship is strongest within 5 kilometers of a facility and is similar across two independently assembled data-center inventories, suggesting that it is both highly localized and not an artifact of a single data source. Although the estimated increase is modest at the individual level, it can meaningfully alter the composition of the electorate in local and state-legislative contests where data-center development is concentrated. (This estimate also precedes the strengthening of this issue's

[10]Three regions in gray had insufficient treated units for analysis, due to their sparse population and few data centers.

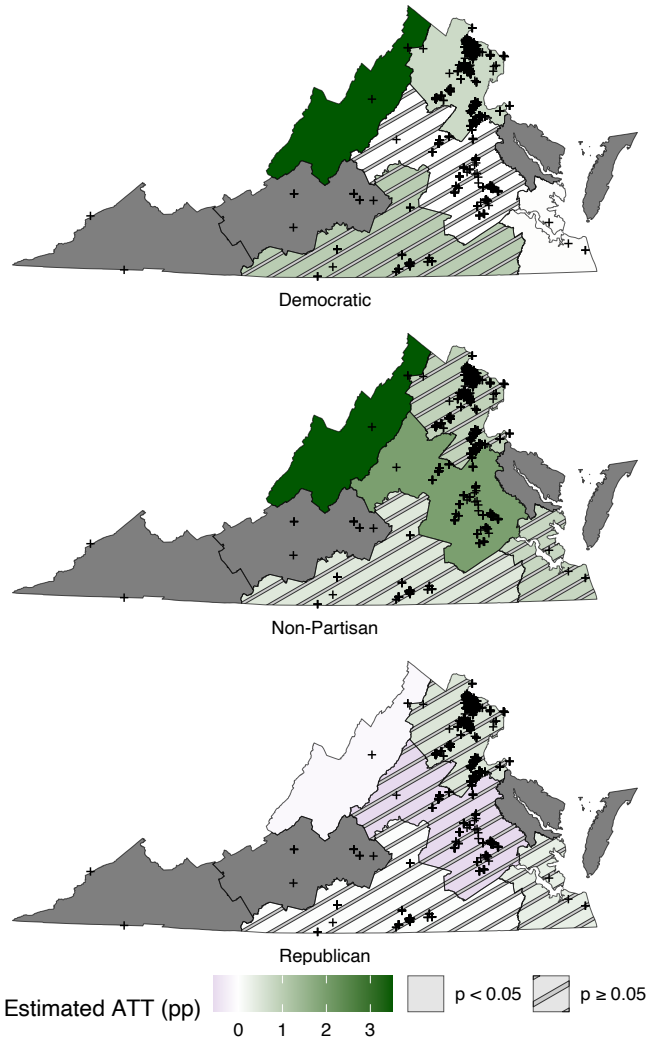


Figure 5: The estimated relationship between data centers and turnout varies within party and region, and indicates that greater turnout sometimes corresponds to higher numbers of facilities in a region, but not always, as in the case of the Shenandoah region. Green regions indicate positive turnout effects; striped regions indicate statistically insignificant estimates. The panels, from top to bottom, show the results for Democratic, Non-Partisan, and Republican voters.

salience during 2026, so the effect may be larger during 2026's midterm elections.) The larger estimates among voters without an inferred partisan affiliation additionally suggest that newly salient place-based issues may mobilize people who are less consistently incorporated into partisan electoral politics.

Taken together, the findings provide evidence that data centers have already been influencing electoral participation before the United States' 2026 midterm elections. They also extend research on place-based mobilization beyond sudden disasters, mass shooting, episodes of police violence, and explicit policy losses (e.g., Hazlett & Mildenberger 2020; Nuamah & Ogorzalek 2021; Ang & Tebes 2024; Hassell & Holbein 2025; Morris & Shoub 2024) to encompass the slower arrival of large-scale AI infrastructure. Yet, at the same time, our design cannot determine whether the additional participation reflects opposition to data centers, support for their economic benefits, or heightened attention to local government. Future research should examine these potential mechanisms, as well as whether the evidence of

participatory effects that we find persists over future elections, extends to voter registration and vote choice, and appears in other state as data center development becomes increasingly prominent in state and local politics.

References

2026. Data centres are turning trump voters into democrats. *The Economist*

Amos B, Middlewood AT. 2024. All eyes on kansas: Voter turnout and the 2022 abortion referendum. *American Politics Research* 52(5):534–545

Ang D, Tebes J. 2024. Civic responses to police violence. *American Political Science Review* 118(2):972–987

Ashford G. 2026. New york enacts nation's first statewide moratorium on data centers. *The New York Times*

Bechtel MM, Hainmueller J. 2011. How lasting is voter gratitude? an analysis of the short- and long-term electoral returns to beneficial policy. *American Journal of Political Science* 55(4):852–868

Biggers DR. 2011. When ballot issues matter: Social issue ballot measures and their impact on turnout. *Political Behavior* 33(1):3–25

Bommarito MJ. 2026. Why communities fight data centers: Evidence from moratoria, litigation, and public opinion. Working paper

Caldwell C. 2026. Republicans are struggling everywhere. this state is the epicenter. *The New York Times*

Carmines E, Stimson J. 1989. Issue evolution: Race and the transformation of american politics. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

Dennison J, Kriesi H. 2023. Explaining europe's transformed electoral landscape: structure, salience, and agendas. *European Political Science Review* 15(4):483–501

Einstein KL, Glick DM, Palmer M. 2019. Neighborhood defenders: Participatory politics and america's housing crisis. New York: Cambridge University Press

Franklin MN. 2004. Voter turnout and the dynamics of electoral competition in established democracies since 1945. Cambridge University Press

Goldmacher S. 2026. The data center backlash bursts into the midterms. *The New York Times*

Goodman DJ, Elliott RF, Plumer B. 2026. Texas republicans are turning against data centers. will it matter in november? *The New York Times*

Hassell HJG, Holbein JB. 2025. Navigating potential pitfalls in difference-in-differences designs: Reconciling conflicting findings on mass shootings' effect on electoral outcomes. *American Political Science Review* 119(1):240–260

Hazlett C, Mildenberger M. 2020. Wildfire exposure increases pro-environment voting within democratic but not republican areas. *American Political Science Review* 114(4):1359–1365

Heering J, Voeten E. 2026. How sovereign control, decarbonization and energy costs shape public support for data centers. *Nature Communications*

Holtermann C. 2026. The teens taking on data centers. *The New York Times*

Kang C. 2026. A county got rich from data centers. some question 'at what cost?'. *The New York Times*

Kollar J, Danielak S. 2026. Planning conflict in the age of ai infrastructure: Governing data center growth in the united states. *Journal of the American Planning Association* :1–14

Lacey RJ. 2005. The electoral allure of direct democracy: The effect of initiative salience on voting, 1990–96. *State Politics & Policy Quarterly* 5(2):168–181

Macur J. 2026. You can't stop this data center, a mom was told. she won't quit. *The New York Times*

Miklian J. 2026. Data center resistance in the united states: Local refusal and the politics of moratoria. Working paper, Centre for Global Sustainability, University of Oslo

Morris KT, Shoub K. 2024. Contested killings: The mobilizing effects of community contact with police violence. *American Political Science Review* 118(1):458–474

Mutz DC. 2002. The consequences of cross-cutting networks for political participation. *American Journal of Political Science* 46(4):838–855

Nuamah SA, Ogorzalek T. 2021. Close to home: Place-based mobilization in racialized contexts. *American Political Science Review* 115(3):757–774

Peeroo A, Wolf C. 2026. Responsible data-centre siting: Public value, community voice, and social legitimacy: Evidence from the proposed potters bar development. Working paper

Rauh A, Reece M, Simko T. 2026. Data centers, community opposition, and local policymaking. Working paper

Riker WH. 1986. The art of political manipulation. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press

Rosenstone SJ, Hansen JM. 1993. Mobilization, participation, and democracy in america. Macmillan

Schaffner B, Shih M, Ansolabehere S, Pope J. 2025. Cooperative Election Study Common Content, 2024

Schattschneider EE. 1960. The semisovereign people: A realist's view of democracy in america. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston

Sirin CV, Villalobos JD. 2024. The effects of empathic reactions to the overturning of Roe v. Wade on campaign participation and voter turnout: Evidence from the 2022 U.S. midterm elections. *Politics & Gender* 20(4):978–1006

Smith B. 2022. It's all under control: Threat, perceived control, and political engagement. *Political Psychology* 43(3):419–436

Soares IV, Yarime M, Klemun M. 2024. Balancing the trade-off between data center development and its environmental impacts: A comparative analysis of data center policymaking in singapore, netherlands, ireland, germany, usa, and the uk. *Environmental Science & Policy* 157:103769

Stevenson IM, Behr P. 2025. With data center fights "tearing apart towns," virginians cast ballots. *E&E News*

University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service. 2017. Virginia's demographic regions

Virginia Department of Elections. 2026. 2025 state board of elections annual report. Tech. rep., Commonwealth of Virginia

Zhang F, Wang S, Siddiki S, Wong DW, Xu J. 2026. Balancing growth and impact: A conjoint analysis of public preferences for data center policy. *Social Science Quarterly* 107(5):e70196