
HOUSE COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

2026 Regular Session

Substitute for Original House Bill No. 1206 by Representative Walters as proposed by the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

This document reflects the content of a substitute bill but is not in a bill form; page numbers in this document DO NOT correspond to page numbers in the substitute bill itself.

To enact R.S. 30:4(U) and Chapter 18 of Subtitle I of Title 30 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 30:1601 through 1603 and Chapter 24 of Subtitle II of Title 30 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 30:2591 and 2592, relative to data centers; to provide authority for the secretary of the Department of Energy and Conservation to monitor and regulate the withdrawal of groundwater and surface waters; to provide for water use permitting; to provide for public hearings; to provide for definitions; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

U. The secretary shall have the authority to monitor and regulate the withdrawal of groundwater and surface waters of the state, subject to the provisions of R.S. 30:98.1 et seq., R.S. 30:1601 et seq., R.S. 38:3071 et seq., R.S. 38:3091 et seq., and R.S. 38:3097.1 et seq.

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CHAPTER 18. DATA CENTERS

§1601. Definitions

As used in this Chapter the following term shall have the following meaning unless context clearly requires otherwise:

"Data center" means a facility that is designed to have a load of one hundred megawatts or more and whose primary purpose is the storage, management, and processing of digital data via the interconnection and operation of information technology and network telecommunications equipment, including all related facilities and infrastructure for backup electricity generation, power distribution, environmental control, cooling, and security.

§1602. Permitting

A. No data center shall commence operations without first obtaining a water use permit from the Department of Conservation and Energy.

B. The secretary shall promulgate and adopt such rules and regulations as are necessary to implement this Section by August 31, 2027.

§1603. Agricultural use exemption

Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, nothing in this Chapter shall be construed to impact, burden, or impose regulatory requirements or fees upon agricultural water users. Agricultural water use, including but not limited to irrigation, livestock watering, and other customary agricultural and horticultural purposes, shall be explicitly exempt from any regulatory or administrative oversight established pursuant to this Chapter. Participation in programs or initiatives established in this Chapter by agricultural users shall be strictly voluntary and without a fee.

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CHAPTER 24. DATA CENTERS

§2591. Data center permitting; hearings

A Permits issued by the department for data centers, as defined in R.S. 30:1601, shall be subject to the requirements of R.S. 30:2017 and 2018 and the provisions of LAC 33:IX.3113, 3115, and 3117.

§2592. Permit transparency

The department shall assign a unique identifier to each data center project. Any permit associated with the data center project, regardless of the named applicant or entity seeking the permit, shall include the unique identifier.

Section 2. The Department of Environmental Quality shall implement the provisions of R.S. 30:2592 as enacted by this Act within one year of the effective date of this Act.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB Draft

2026 Regular Session

Abstract: Provides authority for the secretary of the Dept. of Energy and Conservation to monitor and regulate the withdrawal of groundwater and surface waters and provides for water use permitting.

Proposed law authorizes the secretary of the Dept. of Conservation and Energy to monitor and regulate the withdrawal of groundwater and surface waters of the state, subject to the provisions of present law and proposed law.

Proposed law provides a definition for "data center".

Proposed law provides for permitting of data centers by the Dept. of Conservation and Energy and for the secretary to promulgate rules and regulation necessary for permitting by Aug. 31, 2027.

Proposed law provides an agricultural use exemption from the requirements applicable to data centers.

Proposed law provides that permits issued by the Dept. of Environmental Quality for data centers are subject to the provisions of present law related to public hearings.

Proposed law requires the Dept. of Environmental Quality to assign a unique identifier to data center projects and to include the identifier on all permits associated with a data center project and to have a protocol in place to implement the requirement for a unique identifier within one year of the effective date of proposed law.

(Adds R.S. 30:4(U), 1601-1603, and 2591-2592)