From: Marja Harris
To: House of Assembly - GAA
Subject: Inquiry on AI Data Centres in Tasmania
Date: Saturday, 12 September 2026 10:57:36 PM

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I am very concerned about the proposed and already approved AI data centres on various grounds

Water usage
To cool these centres publicly owned fresh water sources will need to be used. We have limited fresh water and we need to be assured and have legislation in place to ensure that the centres will harvest their own rainwater and to minimise the usage of water by recycling and reusing the water. There is a genuine risk that dam levels will fall and impact our capacity to generate hydro electricity.

Electricity usage
These centres require very large amounts of electricity. Tasmania generates hydro electricity which is, at times not enough for our requirements. On top of that, we are seemingly committed to building a second undersea link in the Marinus cable which is supposed to sell our excess energy to the national grid. The Boyer paper mill asked to have an increase in the amount of hydropower it could access in order to convert their coal fired boiler and decarbonise. They were told there was no spare capacity. This industry genuinely employs hundreds of workers, as opposed to the highly doubtful number of jobs supposedly eventuating from AI data centres.
We are told that the centres will be funding renewable energy projects to help supply their needs. I worry that this will impact our very important tourism industry as the wilderness is damaged by the infrastructure required for this.
I am also concerned that prices will rise for residents' domestic electricity usage, especially as we are all being encouraged to electrify our homes and vehicles.

Living standards for those living in the vicinity
There are many reports from parts of the USA of residents being subjected to constant noise emanating from AI data centres, which makes their lives a living hell. There are also reports of bright lighting around the Centres which disrupt normal day/night routines.

Lack of transparency by government
I am concerned that there has been a lack of consulting with the people of Tasmania with regard to whether these facilities are wanted. It seems that agreements have been reached with Firmus Technology without Parliament being informed. We are now finding out that there may be up to 10 Centres being agreed to. At the very least, there should be an immediate halt while investigations are made into how these deals were decided and whether Tasmania stands to gain anything by having these Centres operating here.

Marja Harris
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