



New York Set to Ban Construction of Large New Data Centers

By Perry Cleveland-Peck

Today: Yearlong restriction on construction comes as anti-AI movement spreads; Illinois governor bars ‘forever chemicals’ in cosmetics; a plan to stop solar storms from sending us back to the Stone Age.



An anti-AI movement is spreading across the U.S. Photo: Zack DeZon for WSJ

Welcome back: Communities are lashing out at the proliferation of data centers across the U.S., fueling an anti-AI movement. They say the facilities, which house the equipment powering artificial intelligence and computing systems, could overwhelm local power supply and raise utility bills.

In New York, Gov. Kathy Hochul is [banning large data-center construction for up to a year](#). She signed an executive order Tuesday halting construction of big, new data centers, her office said, giving the state time to create regulations for data centers that can help the environment and energy grid.

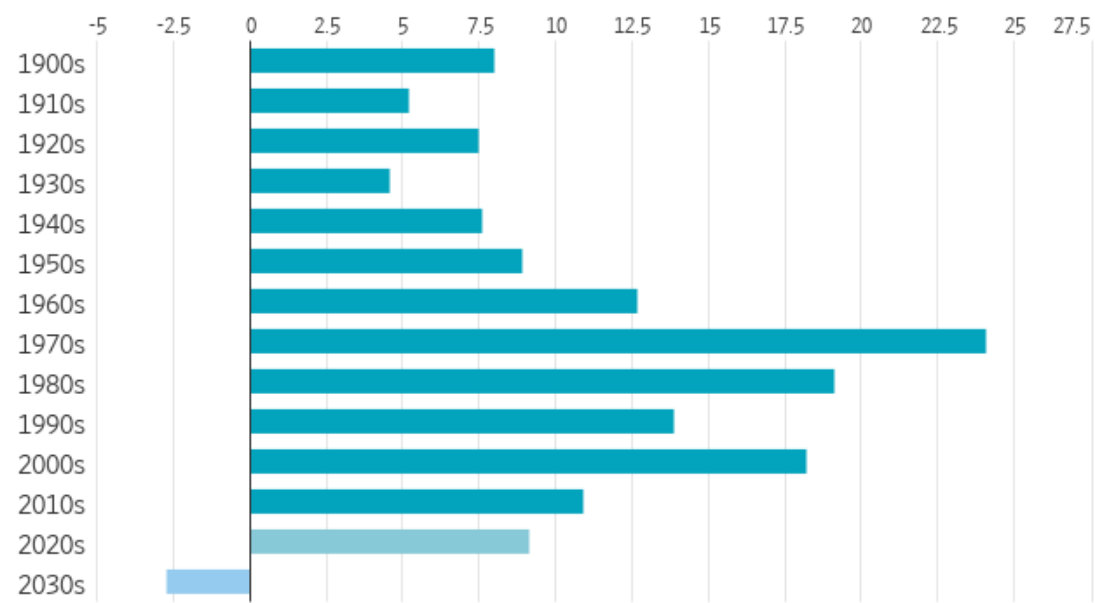
This follows news that America's farmers and cattle ranchers are [raising red flags about the potential drain on local resources](#) that the data-center construction boom poses to rural regions of the farm economy. Some [locals are even using AI to fight data centers being built](#) in their backyards.

Meanwhile, a group of Meta employees is suing the social-media company over how it carried out layoffs this spring, [alleging that it used AI that disproportionately cut workers with disabilities](#) or on protected leave.

The federal lawsuit, filed this week in the Northern District of California, alleges that when Meta began laying off 8,000 employees—or roughly 10% of its workforce in May—it relied on a “constellation of internal artificial-intelligence systems” to create a termination list.

The advent of AI has led to worries that the U.S. faces a future where there will be too few jobs for workers to fill. But the challenge for the economy [could be just the opposite](#): a sharp slowing in the number of people entering the workforce that leading to labor scarcity.

Net entries into the labor force, in millions, by decade



Source: Steven Ruggles