

TONIGHT: WHAT WE SAY

Rachael Nike · Kelly Huston · Candidate questions · Reporter handoff

THE LANE

Kelly makes Project Silo concrete and local. Rachael Nike connects the local case to the new Brighton EDC record, the industrial-land/data-center zoning question and the federal accountability question. Neither speaker alleges a Crusoe-Project Silo connection, claims the 80% Weld County figure is legally effective without records, or says Project Silo violates marijuana-location rules.

Rachael Nike - 4 minutes

My name is Rachael Nike. I live in Lochbuie and organize the Data Center Accountability Project, an independent public-records and community-accountability effort examining Project Silo and large-scale data-center development in Colorado.

I want to be precise. We are not against technology, and we are not automatically against data centers. Data centers can be good neighbors when the size, scale, location, resource use and public costs fit the community.

Project Silo makes those questions real. Denver7 reports an early-stage proposal of roughly 2.5 million square feet across eight two-story buildings in northeast Brighton. Brighton makes the land-use decision, but a city boundary does not contain traffic, noise, utility infrastructure, emergency-response needs or other regional effects. Silver Peaks and Lochbuie are right next door.

Yesterday Brighton added another important piece to the record. The City said it provides Brighton EDC about \$800,000 a year, that the city manager can approve certain business incentives up to \$250,000, and that comprehensive-plan work expanded industrial land designations in Weld County by 80 percent. Yet Brighton's own planning page says the replacement Comprehensive Plan is still a draft and the 2016 plan remains in effect. We need the maps, acreage, parcels and authorizing records behind that 80 percent.

That matters because zoning determines what becomes possible. Weld County adopted data-center-specific rules this year. Data centers are limited to industrial zones in unincorporated Weld County, prohibited in the agricultural zone, and subject to additional review and operating standards.

Colorado also considered statewide data-center legislation this year. SB 26-102 proposed requirements for large-load data centers, including long-term utility contracts and electricity and water reporting. HB 26-1030 proposed a state data-center program tied to utility modernization and consumer and environmental protections. Both were postponed indefinitely.

RACHAEL NIKE CONTINUED

So right now, projects are moving while major policy questions remain unresolved.

Brighton already uses buffers for some lawful businesses when compatibility matters. Its marijuana ordinance uses 1,000-foot separation from schools, residential child-care centers and several other protected uses. Data centers are different, but the land-use principle is the same: high-impact uses can require specific siting rules.

For data centers, we need public review thresholds, residential protections, full-build power and water disclosure, low-frequency noise standards, emergency planning, cross-jurisdiction consultation, and disclosure of incentives and infrastructure costs.

And that brings me to the candidates.

Congressman Evans, your Ratepayer Protection Act addresses who should pay for grid upgrades created by very large loads. What will you do next, and what protections do you support before a project is approved, not only after utility costs are incurred?

Mr. Rutinel, you served on the House Energy and Environment Committee and voted to postpone HB 26-1030 indefinitely. What did you believe needed to change, and what specific data-center policy would you support now?

And to both of you: what enforceable policies will you support so large data centers pay the incremental infrastructure costs they create, disclose projected power and water demand and public incentives before major commitments are made, and still leave local governments the authority to adopt siting, noise, safety, buffer and community-protection standards?

And when a project sits inside one city, but its impacts reach families across the municipal boundary, what should guarantee those neighboring residents a meaningful role before approvals are granted?

We can build the technology America needs. But the rules and the facts should arrive before the concrete.

Delivery marks

- LOOK UP after: "We are not against technology."
- PAUSE after the Brighton 80% industrial-land statement.
- LAND: "Projects are moving while major policy questions remain unresolved."
- PAUSE before: "And that brings me to the candidates."
- LOOK DIRECTLY at Evans for his question and at Rutinel for his question if they are present.
- LOOK TO CAMERA/AUDIENCE for the same core question to both candidates.
- FINAL: "The rules and the facts should arrive before the concrete."

Kelly Huston - 1 minute

My name is Kelly Huston. I live in Lochbuie, close to the proposed Project Silo site.

Brighton is the land-use decision maker for the site, but our neighborhood does not disappear at the city line. Families in Silver Peaks and nearby Weld County communities want the full project facts before decisions become difficult to reverse.

There is also a policy question now. Weld County adopted data-center-specific rules this year for unincorporated land, including industrial-only siting, special review in I-1 and a low-frequency noise limit. Brighton has publicly stated that comprehensive-plan work expands industrial land designations in Weld County, while its replacement Comprehensive Plan remains draft. Those records need to be reconciled.

We are asking Brighton for clear data-center standards of its own: power, water, noise, traffic, emergency planning, residential compatibility, infrastructure costs and a meaningful place for neighboring communities in the process before major approvals are made.

If Kelly is cut to 30 seconds

I live in Lochbuie near the proposed Project Silo site. Brighton controls the land-use decision, but nearby Silver Peaks and Weld County residents can still experience regional effects. We are asking for the full project facts - power, water, noise, traffic, emergency planning and infrastructure costs - and a meaningful place for neighboring communities in the process before major approvals are made.

Core question to both candidates

Colorado is attracting enormous data-center projects, but major statewide policy questions remain unresolved. What specific, enforceable policies will you support so large data centers pay the full incremental grid costs they create; disclose projected power and water demand and public incentives before major commitments are made; and still leave local governments the authority to adopt siting, noise, safety, buffer and community-protection standards?

To Rep. Gabe Evans

Congressman Evans, your Ratepayer Protection Act addresses who pays for grid upgrades created by very large loads. It passed the House 417-3 but fell short of the Senate's 60-vote procedural threshold on Sept. 30, 57-43. What happens next? And what protections do you support before a project is approved, not only after utility costs are incurred, including disclosure of projected load, public infrastructure commitments and incentives?

To Manny Rutinel

Mr. Rutinel, you served on the Colorado House Energy & Environment Committee and voted yes on the motion to postpone HB26-1030 indefinitely. What did you believe needed to change in that proposal? What specific replacement policy would you support now on ratepayer protection, data-center incentives, power and water disclosure, and local control over siting?

If Kyle Clark asks, "What do you actually want tonight?"

Four things: the records behind Brighton's 80% Weld County industrial-land claim; a data-center-specific local siting framework before projects of this scale become precedent; a dated status table showing which Project Silo studies are complete; and specific answers from both CO-8 candidates on who pays, what must be disclosed before major commitments, and how federal protections can coexist with local siting authority.

Do not say

- "Crusoe is Project Silo." We do not have evidence establishing that.
- "Brighton already expanded Weld industrial land by 80%." The City release says that, but its planning page says the replacement plan is still draft. Ask for the authorizing record.
- "Project Silo will use X MW / X gallons." Final full-build figures remain unresolved in the current record.
- "Congress can stop the rezoning." Local land-use authority is separate from federal policy.
- "Project Silo violates the marijuana setback law" or "violates all school/church buffers." That law applies to marijuana stores, not data centers, churches are not listed in the Brighton ordinance reviewed, and exact Project Silo distances to every sensitive receptor remain unverified.
- "Brighton expanded industrial zoning for data centers." The City claimed an 80% industrial-land expansion; the purpose, legal effect and specific parcels still require records.

Pocket facts

Fact	Current wording
Project Silo reported scale	~2.5 million sq. ft.; eight two-story buildings [3]
Brighton EDC annual City support	Approximately \$800,000 [1]
City-manager incentive authority	Up to \$250,000 under the City's stated policy [1]
Weld industrial-land claim	80% in Sept. 30 City release; legal/adoption status needs records [1][2]
H.R. 9340	House 417-3; Senate procedural vote 57-43, short of 60 [5][6]
Lochbuie	9NEWS reports five-year pause on new/expanded data-center applications [9]
Brighton marijuana siting	1,000 ft from schools, residential child-care centers and other listed protected uses; churches not listed [10]
Weld County data-center code	Industrial zones only; I-1 requires USR/public review; agricultural zone prohibited [11]
Weld County noise rule	65 dB(C) at property line for data centers [13]
Colorado SB26-102	Large-load data-center accountability proposal; postponed indefinitely 9-0 [14]
Colorado HB26-1030	Data Center & Utility Modernization; postponed indefinitely 11-2 [15]
Rutinel HB26-1030 committee vote	Yes on motion to postpone indefinitely [16]

Source check

Primary and high-confidence sources used for factual claims in this packet. Campaign statements are identified as campaign statements and not treated as independent verification.

[1] City of Brighton, "City of Brighton and Brighton EDC Named 2026 Medium Community of the Year," Sept. 30, 2026

City statement on Brighton EDC support, governance links, incentive authority, the 80% Weld County industrial-land claim, enterprise-zone acreage, infrastructure investments and named employers including Crusoe AI.

<https://www.brightonco.gov/m/newsflash/home/detail/2978>

[2] City of Brighton, Long Range Planning, accessed Oct. 1, 2026

States that the replacement Comprehensive Plan remains a draft, hearings have not yet been scheduled, and the 2016 Be Brighton Comprehensive Plan remains in effect until adoption.

<https://www.brightonco.gov/553/Long-Range-Planning>

[3] Denver7, Project Silo reporting, Sept. 24, 2026

Reports an early-stage proposal of roughly 2.5 million square feet across eight two-story data-center buildings near County Road 4 and 50th Avenue.

<https://www.denver7.com/news/local-news/in-your-community/north-metro/brighton-residents-uncover-proposal-for-massive-data-center-campus-spurring-potential-moratorium>

[4] 9NEWS event information via Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce, Sept. 29 / Oct. 1, 2026

Lists the two televised Greeley town halls and says both CO-8 candidates declined invitations to the Oct. 1 debate/town hall; the Oct. 1 program instead features voters, advocates and industry leaders.

<https://fortcollinschamber.com/event/9news-town-halls-greeley-september-october-2026/>

[5] U.S. Government Publishing Office + U.S. House Clerk, H.R. 9340, Ratepayer Protection Act

Official bill text plus official House roll call. The House passed H.R. 9340 on Sept. 16, 2026, 417-3. The bill establishes a federal PURPA standard concerning allocation of full incremental grid-upgrade costs for large-load customers.

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-119hr9340pcs/xhtml/BILLS-119hr9340pcs.html>

<https://clerk.house.gov/Votes/2026312>

[6] U.S. Senate, Roll Call Vote 254, Sept. 30, 2026

Official Senate roll-call record: the cloture motion on the motion to proceed to H.R. 9340 was rejected 57-43.

https://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_lists/vote_menu_119_2.htm

[7] Rep. Gabe Evans, official district page

States that Colorado's 8th Congressional District includes most of Adams County and Weld County north through Greeley.

<https://gabeevans.house.gov/about/our-district>

[8] Manny Rutinel for Congress, official campaign site

Identifies Rutinel as a candidate for Colorado's 8th Congressional District. Candidate-position claims should be attributed to the campaign.

<https://www.mannyforcolorado.com/>

[9] 9NEWS, Lochbuie data-center moratorium report, Aug. 6, 2026

Reports Lochbuie approved a five-year pause on applications for new or expanded data centers, described by town leaders as proactive.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8fbWIHG-ug>

[10] City of Brighton, Ordinance No. 2439 / marijuana-location restrictions

Brighton requires marijuana stores to be at least 1,000 feet from schools, residential child-care centers, halfway houses, correctional facilities and substance-abuse rehabilitation centers. The ordinance reviewed does not list churches or places of worship.

<https://www.brightonco.gov/DocumentCenter/View/29895>

[11] Weld County, Ordinance 2026-01 / Data Centers

Weld County adopted data-center-specific zoning standards in April 2026 for unincorporated land: data centers are limited to industrial zones, require public Use by Special Review in I-1 or Site Plan Review in I-2/I-3, and are prohibited in the agricultural zone.

<https://www.weld.gov/Government/Departments/Planning-and-Development-Services/Planning-and-Zoning/Long-range-Planning>

[12] City of Brighton Land Use & Development Code, Article 11 - Industrial uses

Brighton's code recognizes that industrial uses may create off-site impacts and may require special districts, more careful location criteria, or increased site-design and operational limitations.

https://library.municode.com/co/brighton/codes/land_use?nodeId=ART11DETE

[13] Weld County data-center operating standards

County data-center standards include a 65 dB(C) property-line noise limit, air- and water-quality compliance, and lighting controls; Weld County also requires a utility will-serve letter and proof of water under its adopted 2026 ordinance.

https://library.municode.com/co/weld_county/codes/charter_and_county_code?nodeId=CH23ZO_ARTIIPRPE_DIV6USSPREPEPIOMWA_S23-2-490DUBOCOCO

[14] Colorado General Assembly, SB26-102 Large-Load Data Centers

2026 proposal for large-load data-center accountability, including long-term utility contracts and electricity and water reporting. The Senate Transportation & Energy Committee postponed the bill indefinitely on May 11, 2026, 9-0.

<https://www.leg.colorado.gov/bills/SB26-102>

[15] Colorado General Assembly, HB26-1030 Data Center & Utility Modernization

2026 proposal creating a data-center development and incentive program and utility mechanisms for emerging large loads. The House Energy & Environment Committee postponed the bill indefinitely on May 7, 2026, 11-2.

<https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/HB26-1030>

[16] Colorado General Assembly, HB26-1030 committee vote, May 7, 2026

Official vote record shows Rep. Manny Rutinel voted yes on the motion to postpone HB26-1030 indefinitely.

https://leg.colorado.gov/committee_meeting_hearing_items/30887/votes