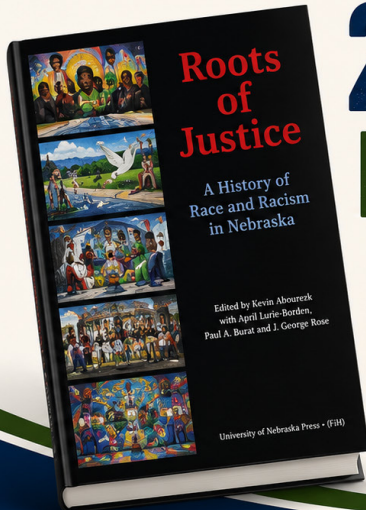


— NEBRASKANS FOR PEACE —



2026 ANNUAL PEACE CONFERENCE



*Learning. Justice. Community.
Building a More Peaceful Future.*

 SATURDAY,
SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

 UNITARIAN CHURCH
OF LINCOLN
6300 A Street
Lincoln, Nebraska



The 2026 Nebraskans for Peace Annual Peace Conference is co-sponsored by the Unitarian Church of Lincoln and the UNO Grace Abbott School of Social Work. CEU credits will be available for eligible participants, providing an opportunity for professionals to deepen their learning while engaging in important conversations around peace, justice, and environmental stewardship.

KEYNOTE PANEL

This year's keynote panel will explore *Roots of Justice: A History of Race and Racism in Nebraska*. The program will begin with an introduction to the book by Dewayne Mays, followed by a panel discussion featuring:

Gabriel Bruguier, discussing his chapter on the *history and experiences of Native Americans in Nebraska*.

Sharon Ishii-Jordan, presenting insights from her chapter, *Exclusions from The Good Life: The Impact of Anti-Asian Racism on Asian Nebraskans*.

Emira Ibrahimpašić, exploring her chapter, *Recent Arrivals: Refugee Resettlement in Nebraska*.

WORKSHOPS

During the afternoon portion of our event, we will have the opportunity to participate in workshops aligned with each of Nebraskans for Peace's three Priority Issues:

ANTI-WAR

Makaela Vanmoorlegem

Civil Dialogue as a Tool for Peacebuilding

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Rachel Gibson

Voting: A Right for All, Accessible to Some, Impactful for All

ENVIRONMENT AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

Ryan Wishart

AI, Datacenters, and Energy Democracy

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Warming

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Seeking Peace
in Nebraska

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DATA CENTER AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Why Counties Need Regulations Before Development

by Emily Haxby, Member,
Gage County Board of
Supervisors and Secretary-
Treasurer of Nebraska
Association of County
Officials

Nearly a century ago, while speaking in Fremont, Nebraska, President Franklin D. Roosevelt explained that America's industrial economy could not prosper unless agriculture also prospered. He recognized that farmers didn't just produce food. They purchased equipment, vehicles, steel, fuel, and countless other products that kept the rest of the economy moving.



"Plans are nothing; planning is everything." — President Dwight D. Eisenhower

That observation is just as true today.

Over the past several months, I've spent a lot of time reading about data centers, listening to experts, speaking with counties across the United States, attending conferences, and following the discussions taking place here in Nebraska.

One thing has become very clear to me...

This isn't about being for or against data centers, but being prepared before one shows up.

NEBRASKA REPORT

The Nebraska Report is published four times annually by Nebraskans for Peace. Opinions stated do not necessarily reflect the views of the directors or staff of Nebraskans for Peace.

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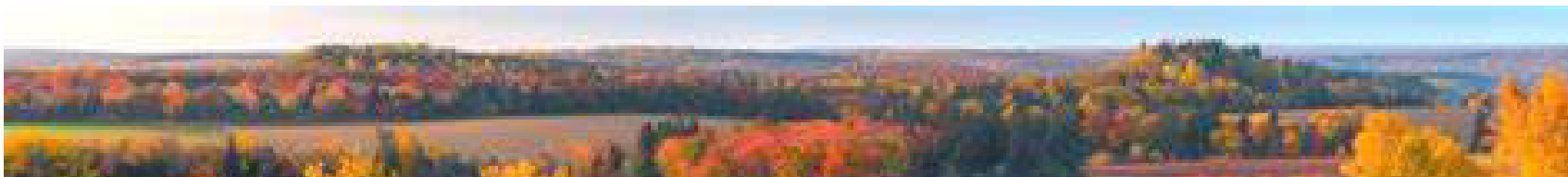
Contact the NFP State Office for information on the UNL, UNO, UNK, Creighton & Nebraska Wesleyan University Chapters and Hastings & Doane College Chapters

NEBRASKA REPORT

NFP is a statewide grassroots advocacy organization working nonviolently for peace with justice through community-building, education and political action.

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Artificial intelligence is driving an unprecedented demand for data centers, and Nebraska is becoming an increasingly attractive location because of our available land and central location.

Data centers absolutely present opportunities. They can bring significant private investment, construction jobs, and infrastructure improvements. They may also generate additional tax revenue, but in Nebraska the amount of that revenue depends on how state law treats the facility for tax purposes. Those benefits deserve serious consideration.

But the size of an investment should never be allowed to end the conversation before it begins.

This year, the Nebraska Legislature passed LB 1261, recognizing that facilities with extraordinary electrical demands require a different approach than traditional development. The Legislature addressed part of the conversation by allowing private power generation for single-use entities requiring more than 1,000 megawatts.

The bill also prohibits public power from using eminent domain for that privately owned generation, and those provisions sunset in 2031. If large-scale development is going to occur under this framework, it will likely occur within the next five years.

Now counties have to address the rest.

Where should these facilities be located? How close should they be to homes? How should water, roads, emergency services, electrical infrastructure, neighboring property owners, noise, lighting, traffic, and eventual decommissioning be addressed? What regulations should be in place before an application is ever submitted?

Those are local decisions.

LB663 also changed how counties process conditional use permits.

Although much of the discussion surrounding LB 663 focused on livestock operations, the language enacted into law applies to conditional

use permits generally. Once a complete application is submitted, counties have specific statutory deadlines to review and act. If those deadlines are not met, the permit may be automatically deemed approved.

At the same time, counties cannot regulate matters that are already regulated by another governing entity.

Water management, for example, falls under our Natural Resources Districts. Electrical infrastructure involves utilities and public power districts. Other environmental matters may be addressed by state or federal agencies.

That means counties must work in parallel with those entities to ensure the natural resources that drive Nebraska's economy are properly considered while still carrying out our local land use responsibilities.

A conditional use permit involving hundreds of acres, extraordinary water demand, massive electrical infrastructure, and potentially billions of dollars in investment deserves thoughtful deliberation. Yet LB 663 places counties on the clock as soon as an application is complete.

That makes planning ahead more important than ever.

The time to study these issues, coordinate with other agencies, hear from residents, and establish clear regulations is before the first application is submitted, not after the statutory deadlines have already begun.

During the Planning and Zoning hearings, there was a statement that moratoriums are a “potential signal it can send to the business community that you’re not interested in this type of development.”

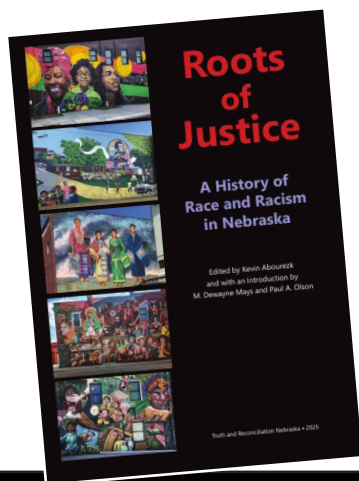
I respectfully disagree.

A moratorium is not saying “no.” By definition, it is a pause.

Claiming that a temporary moratorium signals a county is “closed for business” ignores the plain meaning of the word. If a company cannot understand the difference between taking time to establish fair regulations and rejecting development altogether, I question whether that is the type of company we want making a long-term investment in our county.

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Roots of Justice: A History of Race and Racism in Nebraska



Roots of Justice invites Nebraskans into an honest conversation about our shared history—exploring diverse experiences and uncovering voices too often overlooked. By understanding our past, we can help shape a more just future.

Download FREE or Order Your Copy Today



<https://www.lulu.com/shop/kevin-abourezk/roots-of-justice-a-history-of-race-and-racism-in-nebraska/paperback/product-958rqj.html?page=1&pageSize=4>



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THROUGH EDUCATION, ACTION, AND
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LEARN MORE**
Stay informed,
Take Action,
Make a Difference



*Because the
system isn't*

BROKEN

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Democracy: This is what Democracy looks like.

by Schmeeka Simpson

"Democracy is based upon the conviction that there are extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people."

— Harry Emerson Fosdick

Democracy noun de·moc·ra·cy di-'mä-krə-sē - government by the people: rule of the majority: such as; a: a form of government in which the people elect representatives to make decisions, policies, laws, etc.

according to law. b: a form of government in which the people vote directly against or in favor of decisions, policies, laws, etc. a: a country, state, etc. whose form of government is democracy: a political unit that has a democratic government. b: political, social, or economic equality: the absence of hereditary or arbitrary class distinctions or privileges: an organization or situation in which everyone is treated equally and has the right to participate equally in management, decision-making, etc.

I know y'all are used to me preaching about systems and entities lol however I'm going to share something personal with you all this time. If that's ok. A few days ago, I finally finished my 2024 taxes. Yes, I know, I'm super late lol, however in my defense, I was overwhelmed. In 2024 I was the personal recipient of a \$50,000 grant to do GOTV (Get Out the Vote) work, with the check written in MY NAME. Now two things, 1st this is the most money I have EVER had in my personal possession all at one time. 2nd as a financially disadvantaged single Black mom of 3 girls, I have always saved money by doing my own taxes. Now I'm no tax expert, but I knew enough that if I wasn't careful, I would end up owing lots of money to the IRS that I couldn't afford, so I waited. And waited, until the IRS sent me a couple of letters that motivated me to get 'er done, and that's what I just did.

So, while arduously working on my taxes over the past few weeks, I rediscovered a chapter

in my life that makes my heart so full I still want to spontaneously combust. **I remembered what Democracy looks like**, smells, sounds and feels like, and it's more than just a catchy chant to say at protests. As I reconstructed my records, I opened receipt books I hadn't looked at in nearly two years. I traced Cash App payments, Venmos and Paypal payment receipts. Deciphered handwritten ledgers tracking contractor payments, printing costs, food receipts, fuel receipts, bank records and business expenses. This financial reconstruction solidified what I already knew, the work **cost more than the grant itself, and I ended up taking a personal financial loss.**

Every transaction became another piece of a puzzle I had forgotten I built. As additional receipts surfaced, forgotten hotel stays, personal expenditures, Cash App payments, donated resources, and **unreimbursed expenses revealed just how often organizers absorb costs personally to keep the work**

moving forward. We gladly shoulder the burden for an ideal that is more than an ideal. It's a way of life we are trying to strengthen and perfect called Democracy.

But this idea of Democracy is not and should not be a story of individual profit—it is the story of a collective operation, and every receipt represented a decision made in service of what I thought Democracy should look like. So, while looking at these receipts in 2026, I stopped seeing individual transactions. In my mind and heart, I saw the people this money served and even though I hate how broke I was after, I gained something much more than money and it's not even something that I can easily put into words, it was spiritual.

"Democracy is not something you believe in or a place to hang your hat, but it's something you do. You participate."

— Abbie Hoffman

This money paid organizers from their own communities, who recruited canvassers in those communities to knock on doors in their neighborhoods in 7 different counties, plus the Umoha Native community in Macy, Neb. We specially made it a point to reach communities often overlooked by traditional campaigns. All I heard repeatedly as I personally drove through Nebraska from Omaha to Scottsbluff, from reservations to counties that vote red, is that nobody comes to talk to us, and that broke my heart but made me feel like I was on the right path.

This money paid drivers who ensured voters without transportation could still reach the polls and register to vote after the Nebraska Supreme Court chose to rule in the favor of system impacted community members having the right to vote restored. This money paid voter educators who explained registration, identification requirements, ballot information, political office duties and candidates to neighbors across Nebraska.

The financial records show payments for meals—not because we were celebrating, but because organizing requires feeding people who spend long days canvassing neighborhoods, and the people who came in to take a voter education class right after working 8-10hrs. They show printing costs for advertising and educational materials, administrative support to coordinate a fully equipped staff in total of around 50 people plus local community food vendors and any business that offered us space to hold the voter education classes and drivers to take people to the polls, or the DMV to get their license or even their birth certificates.

That money allowed me to hire a canvasser to travel across the state with me to talk to local businesses about the candidates and the issues in over 20 counties. It paid for hotels, fuel, and countless small purchases that rarely make headlines but make community organizing possible. Community organizing in and of itself is rarely glamorous. The public often sees the march, the press conference, or the election results. They rarely see the logistics behind the scenes—the late-night planning sessions, the lost sleep, the emergency purchases, the meals for exhausted volunteers, the miles driven across the state, or the constant balancing of limited resources against unlimited community needs.

As I continued to reconstruct this financial timeline, I remembered how surreal everything was, almost magical. We didn't have months of planning, I had come up with the idea two days prior to launch, and we worked,

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DATA CENTERS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, CONTINUED

The best companies should welcome a clear, predictable process because it benefits both the developer and the community.

A temporary moratorium says, “Let’s make sure we have the rules in place before we’re asked to make such a huge land use decision in our county.”

Responsible businesses appreciate predictability and residents deserve transparency.

Both benefit from planning first.

I also heard something at a recent conference that really made me think.

The speaker explained that, in many states, only about one-third of a data center’s taxable value comes from the land and buildings. Roughly two-thirds comes from the servers and other personal property housed inside the facility. Because that technology is continually replaced every three or four years, that portion of the tax base can continue to be refreshed rather than simply depreciating away.

That may create significant long-term tax revenue in states where that equipment is taxable.

*****Nebraska, however, is different.*****

Under current Nebraska law, **qualifying data center equipment receives personal property tax exemptions or incentives.** That means we cannot simply look at the revenue generated in another state and assume Nebraska counties would see the same benefit. Here, the local tax base for a data center **ONLY** consists of the land and the building shell rather than the expen-

sive equipment housed inside.

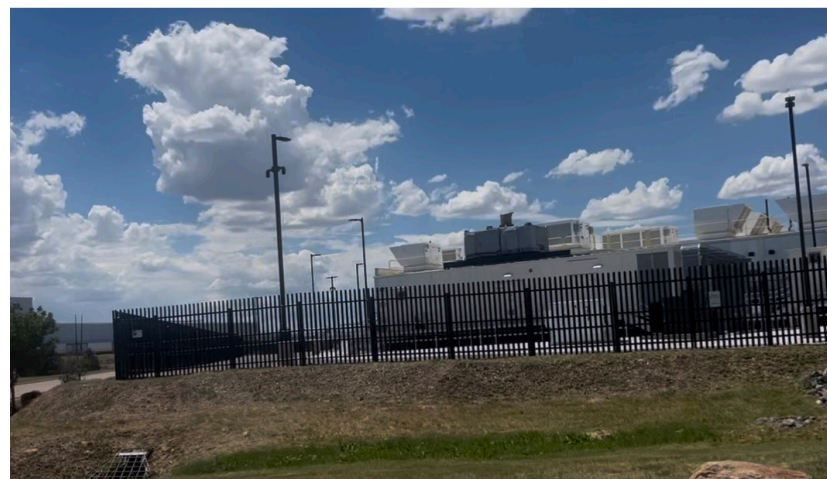
The Governor recently announced an executive order regarding those incentives. While the announcement has generated discussion, an executive order cannot repeal or override a statute enacted by the Legislature.

I don’t necessarily disagree with the Governor’s direction or intent. However, until the Legislature amends state law, the existing statutes remain in effect. The executive order signals a policy preference, but it does not, by itself, change the law.

As a result, counties should carefully evaluate what tax revenue a proposed data center would actually generate under current Nebraska law rather than relying on projections or examples from other states. Under the existing property tax structure, the primary taxable value of a data center is the land and the building itself, while the servers, networking equipment, and other qualifying personal property remain exempt. That makes Nebraska’s tax structure significantly different from many states that generate substantially more local tax revenue from data centers. Until state law changes, counties should base their decisions on the tax structure that exists today, not on one that may exist in the future.

That does not mean data centers are not valuable investments. It simply means we should make decisions based on Nebraska’s laws rather than assumptions.

Tax revenue matters. But tax revenue alone should never deter-



mine a land use decision.

I’ve also heard repeated comparisons about how much water agriculture uses.

Agriculture isn’t simply another land use in Nebraska. It’s our state’s largest industry.

Those acres support equipment dealerships, seed companies, fertilizer suppliers, grain elevators, ethanol plants, livestock producers, processors, truck drivers, banks, insurance agencies, manufacturers, veterinarians, local schools, and countless rural businesses.

Water is one of our most valuable natural resources. It supports our farms, our communities, our businesses, and our families. Agriculture is a major driver of both our county’s and Nebraska’s economy, and water is a critical part of that success. Protecting this resource means looking at how it is used, what it produces, and how it will sustain our communities for generations to come.

County officials aren’t elected simply to maximize assessed val-

uation. We’re elected to represent the people who already call our communities home.

For one family, their home may represent their life’s savings.

For another, it’s a family farm that has been in the family for generations.

For a small business owner, it’s years of sacrifice, long hours, and financial risk.

Those investments matter too.

A billion-dollar investment deserves a fair review... so does a family’s \$500,000 home.

One should not automatically outweigh the other simply because the numbers are bigger.

Economic development matters.

Agriculture matters.

Tax revenue matters.

Property rights matter.

Natural resources matter.

Existing residents matter.

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Because the system isn't broken, continued

laughed and stressed out together for the next 10 days before the November 2024 election and made it work like clockwork until the money ran overly dry. I realized what was documented is not simply where money was spent, but how a network of people in a total of 12 days turned a fluke of financial resources into civic engagement, employment opportunities, voter education, transportation, and relationships that strengthened communities across Nebraska.

"Democracy is not a static thing. It does not stand still. If we don't keep finding ways to expand and deepen democracy, we will see it diminish."

— Jimmy Carter

The receipts stopped being numbers. They became names again to me, and each payment reminded me that this work was never mine alone. Every one of the organizers, canvassers, drivers, admin and financial assistants, voter educators, vendors, media and community leaders who invested their time and labor into strengthening our democracy holds a piece of this work inside of them and inside of me. Democracy has always been a collective effort, and every person listed in these records helped build something larger than themselves.

These receipts are historical records. They demonstrate that democracy is not sustained by speeches alone. Democracy is sustained by ordinary people

willing to invest in extraordinary effort, often at great personal cost, to ensure that their communities have a voice. Every dollar carried the weight of someone's time, someone's labor, someone's belief in the future, and someone's hope that participation could change the course of history.

THE RECEIPTS OF DEMOCRACY

"In a democracy, the highest office is the office of citizen."

— John Gardner

The members of this highest office are in this narrative, and their stories deserve to be told:

Kenith the Canvasser of the Century - Ken is the highlight of the show because he sacrificed so much. Preston Love sent him to accompany me across the state as my driver and de facto bodyguard. Unfortunately, Ken was mugged and beat up the night before we were scheduled to leave. Do you think that stopped him from showing up? **NO**. He had to wear an eye patch, so I ended up doing all the driving while he decided to be the most hard-working canvasser I have ever encountered. I paid Ken \$10 for every business that allowed him to place voter guides in their establishment and that man almost broke me! We drove through 23 counties, and Ken canvassed every store, post office, bank, church, whatever. I really need y'all to picture this 6ft Black man in a camouflage jacket with an eye patch walking up to folks in rural county Nebraska!

With **NO ISSUES!** I think the racists were surprised right out of racism lol! Rain or shine Ken talked to everyone who would listen about the importance of voting in this election and being informed on the candidates and the issues. He worked his butt off and his heart into a literally tizzy and had a mini stroke the day after we returned! **A LITERAL STROKE**. I felt so bad I cried and cried but he stopped that real quick! He had the nerve to tell me quit crying, he's fine, just make sure his check is right!!

Angela 1st time voter, felon turned voting enthusiast - Angela came to me looking for a canvassing job, when I found out she had never voted before. I told her, thanks to the ACLU and the Supreme Court, now she could, even with her felony conviction. She took our voter education class and rode the bus we provided to the polls. While she was standing in the heat for hours in the long lines, she noticed two elderly ladies that weren't feeling so good standing in the heat. Angela gave up her place in line, went into the election commission and told them the situation. The good people there had the ladies skip the line, go inside and cast their votes while Angela went back out into the heat. The ladies were so grateful to Angela that they left and came back with a bouquet of roses for her! All in her first experience voting! She became one of my 2nd best canvassers and ended up telling her story on the news to encourage others.

Mya the Assistant I've always wanted my whole career but could never afford and her family - are the only reason why this went statewide. I was drowning in administrative work plus and she swooped in with spreadsheets and much needed organization. Her husband and son, Steve and Steve lol, helped with food, errands, and financial reconciliation. Absolutely priceless.

Shailyn 1st time voter, an 18 year old graphic designer - My beautiful daughter Shailyn made every flyer for every county, whenever we needed it, johnny on the spot. She had just turned 18 that year too and was one of the 1st to take the voter ed class and bus to the polls. She ended up winning a community award for her efforts. I'm so proud of her!

Sam the admin, a good man wrongly accused but never gave up faith - Just as our campaign began Sam had lost his job after being blamed for a death he did not cause. Eventually, he would be exonerated, but exoneration doesn't pay rent while you're waiting for the truth. When our campaign came together, Sam wasn't just an administrative assistant. He was someone our movement could stand beside during one of the darkest moments of his life. Yes, the paycheck mattered but so did his dignity and so did the truth. It was a blessing to see his smiling face every day, especially knowing the stress he had to deal with. Sometimes community organizing isn't only about

changing policy. Sometimes it's about making sure someone knows they haven't been abandoned.

Steve our brother of another color getting the bag for the community - Steve a white man that grew up in North Omaha and never left. He even worked in a North Omaha school tirelessly on behalf of his students. Steve took the initiative to use his connections, and I dare say privilege, to bring the funders to the table, and the rest is history. None of this would have existed without him.

Lavell who is proud to be native and black, has your back - Lavell connected us with Umoha tribe in Macy, NE that was experiencing an over 60% unemployment rate in their community. When Ken and I drove up to meet with potential paid volunteers at the Macy County Hall, we were met with a room full of excited people. They couldn't believe we came to visit, sharing knowledge and MONEY for them to organize their own communities and they did not disappoint. I was determined to give a job to anyone who could work and work they did! For one week, fundraised dollars circulated through a community where employment opportunities were scarce. Families earned income, local businesses received revenue, and civic engagement became an economic investment as well as a democratic one."

Preston Love needs no introduction he's already a legend

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DATA CENTERS, CONCLUSION

Good planning means considering all of those things together.

It is not choosing one over another, but finding the balance.

That's what county government is supposed to do.

That's what the people who elected us expect us to do.

And I believe that's exactly why planning should always come before permitting and why a temporary moratorium makes sense. It gives us the opportunity to invite everyone to the table: residents, landowners, utilities, Natural Resources Districts, developers, agricultural interests, planners, local officials, and anyone else with a stake in the future of our county. Every voice deserves to be heard, and clear regulations should be established before the first application is ever submitted. That's how we make informed decisions, provide certainty for everyone involved, prepare

for the timelines established by LB 663, and find the balance that best serves our community.

Data centers may represent a significant economic opportunity, and that opportunity deserves serious consideration. **But counties should evaluate those opportunities based on Nebraska law and the revenue that would actually be generated here.** At the same time, county officials were elected to represent the people who already call our communities home. Their homes, farms, businesses, livelihoods, and natural resources are investments just as worthy of consideration as any billion-dollar development. Our responsibility is not to automatically choose one over the other. It is to carefully evaluate every opportunity while protecting the investments made by the people who entrusted us to serve them.

Finding that balance is what matters.

Responsible development requires responsible planning.

DATA CENTERS, DIFFERENT OUTCOMES

Tax revenue depends on state law.

IN MANY STATES

Taxable value includes BOTH the building and the equipment.



REFRESHED TAX BASE.
Significant long-term tax revenue.

NEBRASKA IS DIFFERENT

Equipment is exempt or incentivized.
Only the building is taxable.



NO EQUIPMENT VALUE.
Smaller local tax base.



DIFFERENT TAX POLICY. DIFFERENT OUTCOME.

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WHAT'S HOT IN GLOBAL WARMING?

A Trumpian Fantasy: Existential Threat as Hoax

by Professor Bruce E. Johansen

A continuation from the previous 2026 Nebraska Report

(Brown and Rura, 2024, A-9). Even before Trump was sworn in, battle lines were being drawn between oil and coal mining lobbyists and climate-change advocates, with Trump gathering slogans in favor of fossil fuels, with oil carrying the moniker “liquid gold.” (Ibid). With roughly 26 percent of U.S. oil coming from U.S. federal lands, Burgum was calling for “U.S. dominance” of world oil markets. (Ibid, 2024, A-9). Trump promised to “kill off offshore wind energy” (Ibid, 2024, A-9)

Attention to Trump’s hierarchy of hoaxes reveals that climate change remediation is far from the only small bundle of words for which Trump uses his ultimate insult. Practically anything that he opposes is ripe for branding this way—so much, so often, that authors not only quoted him, but also wrote books about this use of their words.

TIME magazine said: “President Donald Trump has falsely called climate change a “hoax” invented by China, incorrectly suggested that wind turbines cause cancer and dismissed a landmark scientific report produced by the federal govern-

ment’s own scientists. His Administration has sought to roll back key climate regulations at every turn.

That didn’t stop him from holding an event... to argue for his environmental record as he head[ed] into a tough re-election campaign [in 2020] (Worland, 2019).

According to Trump on the stump (which changes day by day), global sea levels are rising, but only by a quarter of an inch in 500 years—or is it half an inch in 400? Whatever it may be, Trump’s estimates are solidly within the who-cares range.

Evidence of environmental damage related to increasing temperatures is showing up around the world, often incident by incident, with patterns tough to delineate. For example, in 2014, an unprecedented oceanic heat wave arose offshore of the California Coast, which many people called “The Blob.” Temperatures that peaked at 11 degrees F. above average killed millions of seabirds, as well as animals as large as some species of whales. The “super marine heat waves” returned again in 2023 with record-breaking tem-

peratures.

By the time the Blob dissipated, more than 90 percent of Northern California’s kelp forests were gone. Back in 2014, I think there was this feeling amongst our experts that relative to land ecosystems, the ocean is really resilient,” said Sara Hutto, the climate change coordinator for the Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank sanctuaries. “We have no precedent for the rate of change that we are seeing,” said Hutto (Erdenesanaa, 2024).

When the Blob struck, far fewer nutrients reached the seas’ surfaces with the phytoplankton, as the food web collapsed. Numbers of larger animals dwindled. Sea stars wasted away. Harmful algae bloomed, spreading toxic domoic acid through the valuable Dungeness crab fishery. Auklets and murre, seals and gray whales also starved.

The highest United Nations court in early 2024 heard the largest case in its history, when 99 national representatives of several nations acted under a U.N. mandate for the International Court of Justice following an opinion on “the obligation of States in respect to climate change.” (Quell, 2024, A-1).

Small states that are surrounded by rising water have been the most active in planning the session of the Court. “We live on the front lines of climate change impact,” said Ralph Regenvanu of Vanuatu, one such state. “We are witnessing the destruction of our lands, our livelihoods, our culture, and our human rights, he said (Quell, 2024, A-4). The Netherlands, the court’s host country, ruled that the effects of climate change constitute a human right that requires protection from such govern-

mental intrusion. The ruling was upheld in 2019 by the Dutch Supreme Court. The small ocean states view aid for global warming as a matter of survival.

However, in the United States, appointees in the Trump administration were busy trying to strip away any trace of government involvement in climate-related work, down to even daily weather forecasts. The elimination of government-funded forecasts was proposed by a new office meant to eliminate any government work that did not meet the new government's standards, as set by Trump accolades. In this case, the so-called Department of Government Efficiency was headed by Elon Musk, the richest person on Earth. Project 2025, the right-wing guidebook for right-wing change in the federal government, called the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which includes the Weather Service, "one of the main drivers of the climate change alarm industry." (Maue, 2024). "With the rising costs of and vulnerability to extreme weather in a changing climate for the United States, dismantling or defunding NOAA would be a catastrophic error," commented Ryan Maue in the *New York Times*.

One of Trump's favorite laugh lines seemed to be that rising sea levels will provide more oceanfront property. For the owner of a beachfront mansion (Mar-a-Lago), this seems to be odd reasoning unless Trump is planning an Olympic-sized salt-water swimming pool with a grand view of the Atlantic Ocean running through Mar-a-Lago's first-floor ballroom. The exercise of judgment, however, has never been Trump's strong suit, either.

Trump's argument about global cooling goes back to a 1974 *TIME* essay titled "Another Ice Age?," which warned of an impending cool period. But as we've explained before, even at that time, those news stories were not accurately capturing scientific thought on the topic. Climate science as a field was also still in its infancy at that time. And that wasn't all. This shaky reasoning went back to at least the 1920s, with false (or even non-existent) media reports. The temperature record was already showing a slow, average trend toward warming. A strong and enduring grip on facts has never been Trump's strong suit, either.

Trump styled himself as a protector of nature even as he called climate change a hoax. "I'm an environmentalist," he said. "I want clean air and clean water. Really clean water. Really clean air." (Gelles, 2024). He then bragged about his record as an environmentalist during his first term: "We had the cleanest air for four years of any country by far," he said. (Gelles, 2024). This false script followed Trump all the way through his 2024 campaign, bristling with truthless twists and turns, as he also bragged about destroying the National Weather Service and other governmental services that serve governmental goals. Consistency once again was not Trump's strong suit.

Indications of a warming planet are not scarce. NASA's Earth Observatory reported December 2, 2024, that Antarctica was turning green with plant life around its edges, especially on the Atlantic Peninsula.

The white, monochromatic vistas of Antarctica, a continent practically synonymous with ice, are becoming more verdant — at least around some of its edges. According to an analysis of 35 years of Landsat observations, the extent of vegetated land on the Antarctic Peninsula has increased more than tenfold since 1986. As glaciers shrink and temperatures warm, plant life is finding more opportunity to move into this and other cold-climate regions. The expansion of greenery on the Antarctic Peninsula may signal a shift in its ecology, researchers say, raising questions about its future.

Throughout his campaign, Trump has courted the oil and gas industry, encouraging energy executives to donate \$1 billion to his presidential campaign while promising to roll back regulations. At campaign rallies, he regularly says he will embrace the mantra of "drill, baby, drill," if returned to office. It was one of his favorite three-word zingers when he was fishing for a cheer from an audience in oil or coal country.

When Trump wasn't calling global warming a "hoax," he called it a "scam" (Doermann, 2024).

*Bruce E. Johansen has written and published several books on this climate change during the past 25 years, the most recent of which is *Nationalism vs. Nature: Warming and War*, from Springer publishers in Frankfurt, Germany.*

SEEKING PEACE IN NEBRASKA

The Founding of Nebraskans for Peace

THREE STREAMS FLOWED TOGETHER IN 1970 TO MAKE THE RIVER OF NEBRASKANS FOR PEACE

by Paul Olson

FIRST, CHURCH GROUPS:

Quakers, the Brethren churches, some Mennonites, and Methodists, especially Methodist clergy, were part of this teaching effort against the war in Vietnam.

One of the earliest town-gown groups, loosely connected with the Quakers and the Fellowship of Reconciliation, called itself Nebraskans for Peace in Vietnam (NFPV). Its history I have not been able to trace thoroughly, because as Dan Schlitt has reminded me, “that was the sixties, and we didn’t do anything according to protocol.” I have found few records. I do know that NFPV raised money, held vigils in Lincoln, counseled students about the draft, and, during the “Vietnam Summer” period in 1967, sent information to public officials and packets to history and social studies teachers to raise their awareness. Among its leaders were Marge and Dan Schlitt, who continued to volunteer for NFP after its founding, Kandra Hahn, Victor Lane, Bill Campbell, and Dick and Jean Gilbert. Lela Shanks has indicated to me that her husband, Hughes, and Hudson Phillips and Bruce McSpadden are working with students at this time through NFPV. This organization may have begun as early as 1966, when the Daily Nebraskan says it started, or as late as 1967. It was clearly alive in 1967, when it solicited local funds and received support from the national 1967 “Vietnam Summer” efforts to organize students, faculty, and townspeople against the war. Its press was an old offset thing located in Bud Narveson’s basement, the group’s “Xerox” and “email” combined. From this group’s press flowed thousands of flyers and political analyses.

I do not have a full account of Omaha activities

during this period, though I do know that Fathers John Krejci and John McCaslin and Vince McAndrews began protests at the Omaha courthouse in 1966, and that other Catholics and religious leaders later demonstrated against the war.

SECOND, STUDENT GROUPS LARGELY BASED AT UNL:

As Mike Shonsey, the first coordinator of NFP after 1970, has reminded me, no one has an analysis of all of the different student groups that opposed the Vietnam war, but they included NFPV students, Yippies, Students for a Democratic Society-ers, independent kids, kids facing the draft, and students who had a base in one or another of the peace churches. By 1966, UNL students were beginning to come alive as protesters because of the draft and because of the draft-counseling efforts of NFPV. Former State Senator Steve Fowler remembers a teach-in at Love Library from about 1966, and in the next few years anti-draft rallies and other demonstrations regularly took place on or near the UNL campus, some of them issuing from NFPV’s draft counseling efforts in the basement of the old United Ministries in Higher Education (UMHE) building and from UMHE’s anti-war religious teachings coming from Pastors Alan Pickering and, later, Larry Doerr. Mike Shonsey, as the first coordinator of NFP, lived at UMHE at the time. (The influence of Carl Davidson, a Philosophy graduate student and founding member of Students for a Democratic Society, should not be ignored either.) UMHE was the primary planning site for the events surrounding the October 15, 1969, teach-ins and demonstrations that accompanied the nationwide “Moratorium to End the War in Vietnam.” In 1969, Larry Zink, later coordinator of NFP, burned his draft card in a Hyde Park-like forum at the Nebraska Union, a watershed symbolic event. (UMHE was also the site of the student meetings that led to the 1970 demonstrations after the invasion of Cambodia and the Kent State killings of students.)



THIRD, RURAL ANTI-WAR GROUPS:

Rural Nebraskans for Peace has a clearer history than do the church and student movements because we have records. Rural Nebraskans for Peace was a genuine Nebraskan and rural organization. One of its leaders was Tom Rehorn, a Methodist clergyman who, in his application for the Methodist ministry, speaks of having “applied the gospel to social issues” and of having been fired “often” for doing so. Like many of the first RNFP people, Rehorn was an incredibly eloquent speaker and grassroots leader.

One source that I found attributed the origins of Rural Nebraskans for Peace to Schuyler’s Arlo (Dutch) Hoppe, who acted after he heard that Rehorn had been “fired” from his job at Wesley House in North Omaha in ‘65 or ‘66 for his peace and civil rights proclamation (Rehorn was moved to Fullerton at a \$1900 per year loss of salary, one quarter of his salary). According to this story, Dutch told his wife, Marilyn, “Let’s drive over to Fullerton and see that guy,” and, around Tom Rehorn’s kitchen table, the families birthed the idea for a rural anti-war and civil rights organization.

The story was probably a little more complicated. As Jim Hoppe — a teenager active in RNFP at the time — remembers, he doesn’t know how Arlo Hoppe knew of Tom Rehorn. However, his father had always despised the cruelty of people killing people, and when his family heard of Rehorn’s removal for opposing the war, it ended up going to Rehorn’s church in Fullerton, about 40 miles from Schuyler. The two families had lunch together after church from time to time, and after several lunches spent talking about everything

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in the world, they decided to do something about war and racial injustice. (Rehorn had been a fundamentalist Baptist from Southern Missouri, before the social implications of the gospels attracted him, and as a Missourian, he liked eating muskrat so Arlo's son would catch muskrat for the Rehorns' table).

The group invited Merle Hansen, a farmer from Newman Grove and the father of student leader John Hansen, into the mix and began buying space in a local paper, where they published editorial-style pieces and quotes from national anti-Vietnam advocates—ministers or scholars. Then the group found Fred Schroeder, who would later often be the spokesperson for RNFP. Eventually, Ted Reeves, Don Reeves' father, came on board, and Ted would take up collections at the RNFP meetings to pay \$200-\$300 for Columbus-area radio programs that broadcast anti-war talks, mostly from a religious and non-violent perspective. With the money, Schroeder organized a 15-minute anti-war radio program in Columbus once a week. (Grand Island's KMMJ wouldn't have them). Eventually, the Columbus station, in an obvious act of censorship, pushed RNFP off the air in favor of extending a Presbyterian broadcast by another 15 minutes each Sunday. Dwight

Dell of the Beatrice area Church of the Brethren, who had run for the U.S. Senate as a peace candidate in the 1950s, soon joined the group.

RNFP members traveled to rural forums wherever they could get a hearing, spoke at the University of Nebraska as the student movement coalesced, and wrote many letters to the editor.

RNFP was not simply an antiwar group. It respected Ernie Chambers' struggle against prejudice and oppression in North Omaha and arranged for exchanges between North Omaha's kids and farm kids. Jim Hoppe recalls the irony of Arlo's taking his farm's watermelons to North Omaha on the grounds that "everybody likes watermelons." When the civil rights parades led by Ernie Chambers and other civil rights leaders took place in North Omaha, RNFP was there with Jim Hoppe and John Hansen riding horses and tractors huffing down the North Omaha streets. In a 1970 paper for the Tri-University project, Rehorn speaks of the witness of the RNFP group as being equally for racial brotherhood and for withdrawal from Vietnam.

In the Nebraska State Historical Society, I have found a Rural Nebraskans for Peace document (from 1970 apparently) that lists the following

Board of Directors for RNFP: Gideon Bratten, Arlo Hoppe, Maxine Schroeder, Mrs. Henry Schutz, Tom Rehorn, Wilfred Wortman, Merle Hansen, Mrs. Arlo Hoppe, Fred Schroeder, Ted Reeves, Warren Messner, Ken Messner, Henry Schutz, "Rev. Cook," Mike Shonsey, and John Hansen. Many of these pioneers later became leaders in NFP. The Rev. Tom Rehorn spoke in 1970 to a group for which he had raised money; that group was composed of eight families, surely the center of the RNFP group listed in the board roster. The document includes a note that Don Reeves and Jack Stout have been elected to the Nebraskans for Peace board, Nebraskans for Peace having been founded by that time.

Don Reeves from RNFP became the first president of Nebraskans for Peace, and Don Reeves and Jack Stout must have been the transitional figures between the NFP and RNFP boards. Similarly, the placement of Mike Shonsey and John Hansen, students at UNL, on the RNFP board must have served to make them bridges between RNFP and the student movement.

The modern statewide NFP group was organized in May of 1967, and its public presence became notable in 1968-70.

Because the system isn't broken, continued

and proves why every single day!

Sam the man with a plan rocking the vote every way he can in Lancaster County. He went to the homeless shelters and the streets to get folks in voter education classes and to the polls. My man Sam is an out of the box thinker and held parties, BBQ's and did whatever it took to reach the people.

Muatasm in Hall county killed a goat in our honor and held a formal feast celebration for the work they were able to do in organizing the GOTV efforts in

their community because of this funding. I KID you not lol (pun intended). The work they put in collectively strengthened their community so much they decided why stop there? Let's get our money together and buy land and open up our own non-profit AND THEY DID!! Malcolm X was proud that day, I know it.

Greg and his team of moneymen and women - Our gracious funders found dollar after dollar for us to work with until the funding ran out mainly because I kept asking for more

money lol. I was trying to hit all 93 Nebraska counties, and they told me they couldn't give me anymore because they had given me more money than any other entity in Nebraska!

Gabriel an African Prince of organizing right here in Douglas County, A Sudanese new American who took the voting information directly to his community. He also took the bus ride to the polls himself so he could share his experience.

Jackson's Fair Deal and Big Mama's Kitchen - Provided

excellent and delicious food EVERYDAY for volunteers and class attendees, breakfast and lunch respectively.

Bro. Eddie the Educator - Came every day we were open to teach the community about the issues and candidates. He took his work home and brought the knowledge back with his added experience as an Elder. A kind and patient man that came early and stayed late so no one was left behind.

And that's not all! There was also Joanna-MXMF, Mindy-ACLU,

NCET, Veronica, Dee, Diallo, Big Will, Marlene, Andile, Larry, Rogelio, Jo-el, Deacon Mays and his wife, The McLellan's, Andrea, Pastor Combs, Pastor Williams, 1st Sky Omaha, William King and the Boss, Best Burger, IBBG and many other people and local businesses and vendors across the State that played their part. I want to say thank you from my soul for your quiet collaboration, and to every volunteer, supporter, donor, driver, organizer,

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Because the system isn't broken, conclusion

community member, and neighbor whose contribution may never appear in a headline but absolutely changed the outcome of this work.

This was an unforgettable experience for me and many others, the kind of experience that can't be measured in spreadsheets full of data but measured in the impact that it left. Would y'all believe people were MAD about this work? Mad because I chose conscience over compliance, mad that I didn't ask permission, mad that I got the money, mad about this,

and mad about that.

Looking back however, I wish I hadn't pissed so many people off lol so this work could have been celebrated more publicly. Not because recognition is the goal, but because the people whose names appear throughout these records deserve to have their labor remembered. They helped build something larger than any single event or election. They gave a shining example of what Democracy looks like. **A REAL DEMOCRACY IS FOR THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE.** It benefits the people, it strength-

ens the people, it enlightens the people, it inspires THE PEOPLE! This campaign wasn't simply about asking people to vote. It was about helping people believe they belonged in democracy!

I'm so glad the IRS made me take this trip down memory lane. I get disillusioned sometimes with all of the struggles in community work, the financial struggles, the power plays, the misrepresentations, the loss of connection to the real people, the hierarchies, and structures and red tape.

Because of receipts I remember now what Democracy looks like. The receipts reminded me that democracy isn't only measured by ballots cast. Sometimes it's measured by lives touched, a paycheck at the right moment or a first vote. A ride across the state. A meal shared after a long day. A community trusted with investment instead of promises. These are the things and people; I remember when I ask myself what democracy looks like, because no receipt captures those sacrifices. No ledger records exhaustion. No

budget line measures love for your community. So, this is a love letter to the people who believed in democracy enough to exhaust themselves for it. Thank you for reading.

All Power to the People.

Protest Chant

"Show me what Democracy looks like! THIS IS WHAT DEMOCRACY LOOKS LIKE!"