

## PUBLIC TESTIMONY TEMPLATE

For City Council / Commissioners Court Meetings

Time Limit: 2-3 minutes (practice beforehand!)

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### INTRODUCTION (15 seconds)

Good evening. My name is [YOUR NAME] and I live at [YOUR ADDRESS] in [CITY/AREA].

### STATE YOUR POSITION (15 seconds)

I am here tonight to [SUPPORT / OPPOSE] the proposed [DATA CENTER DEVELOPMENT / ZONING VARIANCE / SPECIFIC ISSUE].

### KEY POINTS (90 seconds – pick 2-3 strong points)

#### Point 1 – Personal Impact:

This development will directly affect [MY FAMILY / MY PROPERTY / MY BUSINESS / OUR COMMUNITY] because...

Example: "This facility will use 4.5 million gallons of water daily while my neighbors and I are under Stage 3 water restrictions, limited to watering once per week."

#### Point 2 – Factual Concern:

According to [SOURCE – e.g., Houston Advanced Research Center study], data centers in Texas...

Example: "According to the Houston Advanced Research Center, data centers will consume 399 billion gallons annually by 2030 – that's 6.6% of Texas' total water supply."

#### Point 3 – Community Impact:

Our community deserves...

Example: "While we welcome economic development, this 520-acre project will create only 30-50 permanent jobs – fewer jobs than the farms currently operating on this land."

### SPECIFIC REQUEST (30 seconds)

I urge you to [SPECIFIC ACTION]:

- ☐ Vote NO on the zoning variance until a water impact study is completed
- ☐ Require the developer to conduct an environmental impact assessment
- ☐ Hold a public hearing with 30-day notice to allow community input
- ☐ Table this decision until [SPECIFIC CONDITIONS MET]

### CLOSING (10 seconds)

Thank you for your time and for considering the concerns of your constituents.

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#### TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE TESTIMONY:

- ✓ PRACTICE with a timer – 2 minutes goes FAST
  - ✓ Bring 10 copies of your written testimony to hand to council members
  - ✓ Speak slowly and clearly – they're taking notes
  - ✓ Make eye contact with council members
  - ✓ Stay calm and professional, even if others get emotional
  - ✓ Don't repeat what previous speakers said – add new information
  - ✓ Stick to facts – emotion is okay, but lead with data
  - ✓ Address the council, not other audience members
  - ✓ If interrupted by time limit, finish your sentence and stop
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- x DON'T attack individuals personally
  - x DON'T make claims you can't back up with sources
  - x DON'T go over time – you'll be cut off and lose credibility
  - x DON'T speak from anger – it undermines your message

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#### SIGN-UP PROCESS:

1. Arrive 30 minutes early
2. Look for sign-up sheet at entrance or with City Secretary
3. Fill out: Name, Address, Topic
4. You'll be called in order – listen for your name
5. Approach the podium when called
6. State your name and address clearly for the record
7. Begin your testimony

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#### IMPORTANT NOTES:

- Meetings are recorded and become public record
- Be truthful – false statements can undermine your credibility
- Council may ask questions – answer briefly and honestly
- They may not respond to your testimony – don't take it personally
- Follow up with a written copy of your testimony via email

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For more information and support:  
Email: [contact@wacodatacenter.com](mailto:contact@wacodatacenter.com)  
Website: [www.wacodatacenter.com](http://www.wacodatacenter.com)

We offer testimony prep workshops – check our events calendar!