



# JAMIE COLLINS

*for Deschutes County Commissioner*

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Statement by County Commission Candidate Jamie Collins on the Proposed La Pine Data Center**

LA PINE, Oregon — Ahead of tonight’s La Pine City Council meeting on the proposed Boxminer cryptocurrency data center at the La Pine Industrial Park, Jamie Collins released the following statement:

*“The people of Deschutes County can count on me to put our families first, supporting development that benefits our local community — not out-of-state data center developers and mega-millionaires. What we’re seeing with the proposed data center in La Pine is a page from a well-worn national playbook: an out-of-state corporation sees an opportunity in a rural community to cash in, makes unverified promises about water, power, and jobs, and pushes public officials to sign fast, without due diligence.*

*“I’ll oppose data centers that exploit our land, water, and electric grid and drive up costs for local families — unless there’s a clear local benefit for everyone, and unless every contract is negotiated transparently and with full community input.”*

#### **Background Information:**

- **Boxminer’s own representative admitted to the La Pine City Council in March that the company’s ‘closed loop’ cooling technology is unproven.** And the trade-off that comes with these closed-loop systems — when they do work — is massively higher electricity demand than a standard data center. It’s unclear if Midstate Electric has enough electricity to meet that demand without causing blackouts or skyrocketing rates for other residential or commercial customers.
- **Commissioner DeBone led the Board of Commissioners in signing away the County’s negotiating authority over the Industrial Park three times — while he sat on the SLED board that was quietly advancing the deal with Boxminer.** The County executed initial intergovernmental agreements with the City of La Pine in 2015, 2019, and 2024, that give the city primary control over what happens in the Industrial Park, which is located on County land. Local governments should have the primary

say over economic development in their communities — but everyone in Deschutes County deserves a say over a facility like this one. Data centers strain water resources, the electrical grid, and first responders many miles away from their locations.

- **Commissioner Tony DeBone is a member of the Sunriver-La Pine Economic Development (“SLED”), which is responsible for quietly bringing Boxminer to La Pine.** Per the City of La Pine’s official statement on the proposed data center, “the SLED (Sunriver La Pine Economic Development Board), an independent advisory group, first approached the City with an inquiry regarding the development of a Data Center earlier in 2026 ... [and] made a recommendation to the La Pine City Council to consider the proposal.” SLED is a public-private partnership between the City of La Pine, Deschutes County, the private business sector, and Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO). Per Central Oregon Daily reporting (May 12, 2026), Boxminer representative Jeff Keller told the La Pine City Council on March 11, 2026, that he had been working with Midstate Electric and SLED Executive Director Patricia Lucas since 2022.
- **DeBone’s single largest campaign donor this cycle is a cryptocurrency executive based in La Pine.** Per The Bend Bulletin (Feb. 28, 2026) and The Source Weekly (Mar. 31, 2026), Patrick Gruhn — a tech executive operating an international cryptocurrency trading business with an office in La Pine — has contributed \$20,000 to Commissioner DeBone’s 2026 reelection campaign. Commissioner DeBone has not made any public statement raising concerns about the Boxminer proposal, despite the growing concern, grassroots opposition, and a groundswell of public comment.
- **Oregon context.** In Crook County, school districts have been pushed into severe financial strain after officials granted corporate tax abatements to data center operators. Statewide, business property-tax breaks — many to data centers — cost Oregon schools approximately \$275 million in 2024 (Bend Bulletin / Oregon Capital Chronicle reporting). Last month, Microsoft, the world's largest buyer of voluntary carbon offsets, paused all new offset purchases — a market signal that the data-center industry’s environmental commitments are weakening at the same time demand for AI and cryptocurrency computing is exploding.

### **About Jamie Collins:**

Jamie Collins is a 22-year U.S. Coast Guard veteran, climate scientist, and disaster responder running for Position 1 on the Deschutes County Commission. He has led responses to more than 300 oil spills and natural disasters across central and eastern Oregon, including multiple releases of hazardous materials from data centers and other industrial facilities. He has received endorsements from current and former local elected officials, trusted organizations like VoteVets, the Central Oregon Building and Construction Trades Council, Sierra Club, Oregon League of Conservation Voters, Ironworkers Local 29, and SEIU, and dozens more community leaders across Deschutes County.

*Learn more about Jamie at <https://www.collins4deschutes.com> or follow him on Instagram @collins4deschutes.*

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