ORDINANCE NO. 2026-____

AN ORDINANCE OF CITRUS COUNTY, FLORIDA ESTABLISHING A TEMPORARY MORATORIUM FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, OR EXPANSION OF, AND FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BUILDING PERMITS, DEVELOPMENT ORDERS, OR THE REZONING OF PROPERTY FOR DATA CENTER FACILITIES WITHIN THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF CITRUS COUNTY; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF CONFLICTING PROVISIONS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR MODIFICATIONS THAT MAY ARISE FROM CONSIDERATION AT PUBLIC HEARING; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) has the authority pursuant to Chapter 125, Florida Statutes, and Article VIII of the Florida Constitution to protect the public health, safety and general welfare of its residents and to enact ordinances for valid governmental purposes that are not inconsistent with general or special law; and

WHEREAS, on May 12, 2026, the Board directed staff to prepare an ordinance instituting a temporary moratorium on the acceptance, review, or approval of applications for data centers, data center facilities, and data center utilities or the issuance of building permits, development orders or the rezoning of property for data centers, data center facilities, and data center utilities; and

WHEREAS, Citrus County is located within a coastal region, an area that relies heavily upon groundwater resources from the Floridan Aquifer system, which has historically been subject to significant management and conservation efforts due to saltwater intrusion risks and long-term sustainability concerns; and

WHEREAS, state and regional planning efforts emphasize the importance of careful management of groundwater withdrawals and coastal water resources to ensure long-term environmental and economic stability for coastal communities; and

WHEREAS, data centers, data center facilities, and data center utilities are known to require substantial water resources for cooling systems and substantial electrical power, which in some cases require large infrastructure demands; and

WHEREAS, such facilities have the potential to place significant demands on regional groundwater supplies, water treatment infrastructure, and electrical grid capacity, particularly in rapidly growing areas; and