

BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND TRAINMEN

District of Columbia — State Legislative Board

Amtrak / MARC / VRE



P.O. Box 77871 • National Capital Station • Washington, DC 20013-7871
Tel: (202) 298-4598 • E-mail: HHarris@DCSLB.org

Herbert Harris, Jr.
Chairman
State Representative

Support – House Joint Resolution No. 7

2026 FIFA World Cup – Protection of Human Rights

Monday, February 24, 2020

Crew Bases

Pittsburg, PA

Huntington, WV

Baltimore, MD

Washington, DC

Manassas, VA

Charlottesville, VA

Fredericksburg, VA

Richmond, VA

Raleigh, NC

Charlotte, NC

Florence, SC

TO: Honorable Anne Healey, Chairman, and Members of the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

FROM: Herbert Harris Jr
Chairman / State Representative
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers & Trainmen / IBT

Chairperson Healey and Members of the House Rules and Executive Nominations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on House Joint Resolution No. 7 (HJ 7) - "2026 FIFA World Cup – Protection of Human Rights".

I am Herbert Harris, Jr., Chairman / State Representative - Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen / IBT. I represent the locomotive engineers that operate MARC – Penn Line Service, and Amtrak - Acela, Regional, and Long-Distance service.

LEGISLATION – HJ 7

Today, I am here to support and encourage your favorable approval of HJ 7 "2026 FIFA World Cup – Protection of Human Rights".

The FIFA World Cup is the single largest sporting event in the world. It is a once in a generation opportunity to be a host city for the World Cup. I know first-hand because I served on the 1994 World Cup - Protocol Staff as the VVIP Representative for the Washington, D.C. venue at RFK Stadium and Finals in Los Angeles, California.

The last time the World Cup was held in the United States it broke all previous cumulative attendance records by 1 million with attendance over 3.5 million people. The 52-game tournament held at nine U.S. venues attracted an average 69,000 soccer fans establishing a new benchmark for FIFA.

The selection of the Baltimore / Washington bid as a North American finalist provides a unique opportunity for the region. We would be able to showcase our hospitality and tourism industry, cultural diversity, and historical attractions to the world.

The FIFA World Cup is a global platform on issues affecting the world and host country. The platform invites advocacy, protest, and introspection on the issues affecting fans, indigenous citizens, and the environment.

Regretfully, FIFA and the World Cup have not been good corporate citizens. The AFL-CIO and Human Rights Organizations have been working to improve economic development opportunities, minimize environmental impacts, and protect human rights in the United States.

House Joint Resolution 7 highlights the policy and laws enacted in Maryland that will enable it to host an inclusive global event. We have the experience hosting international events; Preakness, Papal Visits, Presidential Inauguration, IMF and the transportation systems to safely move the thousands of visitors.

Our transportation systems: MARC, Amtrak, VRE, WMATA, MTA, and DDOT move thousands of tourist and commuters daily throughout the region. My colleagues and I in the transportation sectors will work to safely move the visitors and fans between the venues, hotels, and events.

Our region is diverse and global with universities that welcome people from all over the world. We can and will host a successful World Cup if given the opportunity. Your approval of HJ 7 will significantly improve our bid possibility.

My 1994 World Cup experience was a personal and professional career highlight. I strongly encourage your favorable approval of HJ 7, so other will have the opportunity to welcome the world and learn from this special global event.