



January 17, 2024

The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
The Honorable Jim Rosapepe, Vice Chair
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West - Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Written Testimony of Victoria Leonard on
SB 79 – State Finance Prohibited Appropriations Magnetic Levitation Transportation System
Position: Oppose**

Thank you Chair Guzzone and Vice Chair Rosapepe and members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee for the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to SB 79.

My name is Victoria Leonard, Political and Legislative Director for the Baltimore-Washington area of the Philadelphia/Baltimore/Washington Laborers' District Council (PBWLDC), an affiliate of the Laborers' International Union of North America, or LiUNA for short. The PBWLDC represents more than 13,000 members. Our members are proudly employed on many infrastructure construction projects across the region.

LiUNA strongly opposes SB 79. SCMAGLEV does not include any state financing, and it doesn't need it. Construction costs will be split among the Japanese government, the Central Japan Railway, and the U.S. government. Independent ridership and revenue studies validate the financial feasibility of the project, and that operating and maintenance costs will be offset by revenues. Moreover, the environmental study was funded by the federal government through the Maglev Deployment Program, with matching funds from the private sector.

LiUNA believes that the SCMAGLEV would transform the Northeast region by reducing travel times between New York City and Washington, DC to under one hour. The first phase would connect Washington, DC and Baltimore in just 15 minutes. It would allow our nation's capital to lead the way in adopting the fastest and most advanced transportation system in the world.

At the same time, the project would provide much-needed employment opportunities, including quality union construction jobs that will create a pathway to the middle class for Baltimore-Washington area residents. According to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), construction of the first phase alone would result in the creation of more than 160,000 regional jobs. Moreover, the project would take up to 16 million cars off the road, substantially reducing congestion and improving our region's air quality.

LiUNA urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report on SB 79.