

January 17, 2024

SB0079

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

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB0079 —STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED APPROPRIATIONS – MAGNETIC LEVITATION
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Position: OPPOSE

Dear Chair Guzzone, Chair Feldman, and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation and Education, Energy, and the Environment Committees, I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Business Clergy Partnership (MBCP) to share our opposition to SB0079 and our strong support for the Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) high-speed rail project that will connect Baltimore to Washington D.C. in 15 minutes. MBCP is a bipartisan organization with a mission to bridge the gaps between businesses, faith-based communities, elected officials and governments.

Our goal is to make a difference in every community throughout Maryland by changing the political climate through policy and advocacy to open up doors for all. MBCP has led numerous successful campaigns that have produced real change throughout the state. We feel strongly about partnering with businesses, organizations, and activists that are committed to help producing change from within. A project like BWRR's signifies opportunities, education, and hope for our state in a time where opportunities are lacking. Thousands of jobs will be created in the region not only during the construction phase of the project but will also serve as a pathway to various employment fields and provide workforce training.

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail is dedicated to working with organizations like ours to develop the necessary education programs to build this workforce. The newly educated and skilled workers will have a lasting effect for generations to come. This bill could prohibit the state of Maryland and its citizens from seeing the benefits of a project like this. The project would bring a \$6.5 billion increase in GDP from construction and \$268 million annually from operations and would mean opportunities for contracts for local businesses and cleaner air for all.

Seeing as our mission is to serve as a proponent for opportunity and change for Maryland residents, this bill stands in the way of the very principles our organization is built on. Thus, we ask that you submit an unfavorable report on SB0079.

Sincerely,

Lisa Ellis, Director of Marketing & Communications
Maryland Business & Clergy Partnership
204 Washington Avenue,
Laplata, Maryland 20646
(301) 535-8783