



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**

Dear Chair Guzzone, Chair Feldman, and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation and Education, Energy, and the Environment Committees:

I am writing you today in my role as co-founder of the Maryland Minority Business Counts (MMBC) Initiative to state our group's strong opposition to SB0079.

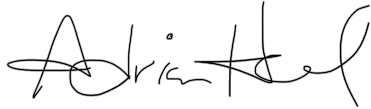
The MMBC identifies, promotes, supports, and encourages current and future black business owners in Maryland. We assist them in pursuing and securing procurement opportunities through state with public and private sector contracts. SB0079 is in conflict with our core principals and defeats the very premise by which a level playing field might be established for black and minority entrepreneurs in Maryland. Therefore, and we must insist that this bill receives an unfavorable report.

The SCMAGLEV project could represent billions of dollars in business and employment opportunities for Marylanders. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plans proposed by Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail, which serves as the developer for SCMAGLEV, has pledged \$4 billion of the total project's procurement would be committed to contracting minority and women-owned businesses. Given our state's goals to expand opportunities for minority-owned businesses as a vehicle to support "work, wages, and wealth" would all but be "derailed", should SB0079 be allowed to pass.

Maryland minority-owned businesses need MORE NOT FEWER opportunities, especially given the considerable projected budget shortfalls we are bracing for in the coming year that could have lasting impacts on the state-wide economy.

I urge the Maryland legislature to keep the opportunities for black and minority business offer by the SCMAGLEV “On-Track” and **provide an unfavorable report to SB0079.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adrian Harpool". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Adrian" being more prominent than the last name "Harpool".

Adrian Harpool  
Co-Founder  
Maryland Minority Business Counts