



HB 715
State Finance and Procurement – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation
Transportation System
Appropriations and Transportation and Environment Committees
Position: Oppose

Maryland AGC, the Maryland Chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America, provides professional education, business development, and advocacy for commercial construction companies and vendors, regardless of labor policy. AGC of America is the nation’s largest and oldest trade association for the construction industry. AGC of America represents more than 26,000 firms, including over 6,500 of America’s leading general contractors, and over 9,000 specialty-contracting firms through a nationwide network of chapters. Our members include many contractors who construct transportation systems. Maryland AGC opposes HB 715 and respectfully requests the bill be given an unfavorable report.

HB 715 effectively prohibits the construction of a Maglev system anywhere in Maryland. The bill does so regardless of the benefits from its construction, including potentially thousands of construction jobs, and the tax revenues Maryland would realize from income and sales taxes. It does so regardless of the benefits of reduced vehicle traffic and associated accidents and exhaust emissions, and reduced or, practically speaking, eliminated rail accidents. It does so regardless of the benefits to both the Baltimore and Washington DC Metropolitan areas of speedy commuting. It does so without any consideration of alternative financing mechanisms, such as a public-private partnership. Indeed, HB 715 does so without any regard for or consideration of the merits of Maglev or the potential for solutions to issues that opponents may have regarding Maglev.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) are preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the potential impacts of constructing and operating a Maglev system between Washington, DC and Baltimore, Maryland with an intermediate stop at BWI Airport. HB 715 would ban Maglev regardless of the conclusions of the EIS, including potentially positive impacts in reducing global warming.

Decisions about appropriate transportation modalities should be made based on the expert advice of transportation planners and Federal, State, and county transportation professionals. Public policy considerations are always appropriate, but should be based on a complete understanding of all of the relevant factors, pro and con, not a priori conclusions. Essentially HB 715 takes the position “my mind is made up; don’t confuse me with the facts.”

Accordingly, Maryland AGC opposes HB 715 and respectfully requests the bill be given an unfavorable report.

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