



Committee: Budget and Taxation

Testimony on: SB359- State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

Organization: Greenbelt Climate Action Network

Submitting: Maureen Fine

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: Feb 9, 2022

Dear Chairman and Committee Members:

The Greenbelt Climate Action Network (GCAN) is writing in support of SB359- State Finance-Prohibited Appropriations-Magnetic Levitation Transportation System.

GCAN's mission is to educate residents about climate change, “systemic” solutions, how they can change their behaviors to be more sustainable, and take personal, local, systemic, and political action.

Over 50 environmental groups (including CBF, MD Sierra Club, and Audubon of the Mid-Atlantic) and numerous community groups and agencies (including PG County NAACP, PG County Public Schools, and Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit) have enumerated the overwhelming negative social, economic, and environmental impacts that the SCMaglev would have on Prince George's County and throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Maglev would be one of the most expensive rail lines ever built, an estimated \$250 million/mile as per Carol Park, a senior policy analyst for the MD Public Policy Institute. And tax dollars will definitely be needed---tax dollars that will come from far higher priority state and national infrastructure projects. Too many people in Central Maryland face transportation-related barriers preventing job access, and public transportation is too often unreliable and does not efficiently connect to employment centers. Increased investment in MTA, MARC and Amtrak are a much higher priority for our region, and promise to improve quality of life, as opposed to the harmful consequences of the SCMaglev.

Amtrak continues to work collaboratively with the FRA, NEC, MTA, MARC, VRE, DDOT, and WMATA, as well as the states of Maryland and Virginia, Washington, DC, and others. Continued development and support of Amtrak is a far better solution to our transit needs than moving forward with building the SCMaglev transportation system. Amtrak and its options provide a reliable, technically and financially-proven system at a reasonable cost for near- and long-distance rail transportation that accommodates commuters and passengers.

For all these reasons, we recommend a FAVORABLE report for SB359 in committee, to prohibit appropriations for a Magnetic Levitation System.

Sincerely,

Maureen Fine
Volunteer
Greenbelt Climate Action Network