

ANNE HEALEY  
Legislative District 22  
Prince George's County

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Chair  
Rules and Executive  
Nominations Committee

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Environment and Transportation  
Committee

Chair  
Local Government and  
Bi-County Issues Subcommittee



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E&T Hearing – Jan. 27

*HB120 – Railroad Companies - Condemnation Authority*

Mr. Chair, members of the committee, for the record, Del. Anne Healey. Thank you for the opportunity to present HB120, a bill that protects property owners from any future MAGLEV projects.

**What does the bill do?**

This legislation ensures that the authority granted to railroad companies to acquire property in this state via condemnation does not apply to railroad companies that own or operate a MAGLEV system. Eminent domain and the ability to take or condemn private property for public use is a long-standing power that has had a watchful eye from state government and relies on two rules of 'just compensation' and 'public use.' Railroad companies are currently allowed by law to come to an agreement with a property owner to purchase, use, occupy or divert part of the owner's land and that authority applies to all railroads operated by electricity, cable or other improved motive power. This bill would simply remove MAGLEV companies from that list of potential condemnation authorities in order to further protect property owners and communities who don't wish to see their land or homes removed in favor of a 375 mile-per-hour train.

Our county delegation of the House of Delegates, the county council, and the county executive have all been united and vocal that a MAGLEV train between Baltimore and D.C. would negatively impact Prince George's County's 900,000 residents. When first proposed, the MAGLEV project supporters assured the public they would not use eminent domain powers but within the last year, they did actually threaten to use it in a way that would undermine a major redevelopment project in Baltimore City.

HB120 would clarify that a MAGLEV operation is not the kind of railroad that has condemnation powers under Maryland law.