

**HB0120 Railroad Companies – Condemnation Authority Application --
Support**

**Testimony of Lisa R. Hodges-Hiken, Esquire
Executive Director**

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**Before the
House Environment and
Transportation Committee
General Assembly of Maryland
January 27, 2022**

Chair Barve and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee, my name is Lisa Hodges-Hiken providing written testimony in my capacity as the Executive Director of the Westport Community Economic Development Corporation in support of HB 0120 Railroad Companies - Condemnation Authority – Application bill, specifically the provision which prohibits condemnation by a company using magnetic levitation as the means of transportation.

Westport would be directly impacted by the current plan for building a magnetic levitation mode of transportation and we assert that because of this direct impact administrative condemnation subverts our residents right to be heard, causing irreparable harm to our historically African American neighborhood. We believe that the way the Baltimore Washington Rapid Rail, LLC has construed existing law to apply to magnetic levitation transportation vehicles was not contemplated when the law was originally written. We believe that House Bill 0120 corrects any gap in understanding and prevents future harm to our community.

We attach our amicus brief filed in the condemnation action to further enlighten the committee regarding our position.

In conclusion, I hope that this testimony has been helpful and respectfully request passage of this bill

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Lisa R. Hodges, Esquire
Executive Director
Westport CEDC