

Support Maryland General Assembly Senate Bill 79

State Finance – Prohibited

Kathy Bartolomeo

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

West Miller Senate Building

11 Bladen Street - Room 3

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Hearing on Wednesday, January 17, 2024

As the state of Maryland is facing a projected funding deficit of \$3.36 billion, and possibly higher in the next few years, we need to be very selective as to where we direct our money. With climate a huge concern for Maryland, and funds needed to help mitigate the results of our climate changes, we will need to push forward with projects that lessen its impact. Transportation for mass transit, pedestrian, biking safety and encouragement, EV charging, EV incentives, electrification of vehicles, and buildings, upkeep and improvements to MARC, and the long-awaited Red Line for Baltimore are where I see funding needed.

With a large deficit, it is critical that our legislators direct funding carefully to proven, safe and sustainable transportation. Currently, we have no assurance that SCMaglev is sustainable. BWRR has not shared this information. And there are safety concerns that have not been addressed.

So much has not been shared by BWRR such as claims jobs and revenues and their analyses. These claims need to be carefully addressed as they are unsupported.

How would BWRR address the potential release of toxins, carcinogens, and radon gas collected in the SCMaglev tunneled sections into our communities through their surface ventilation facilities?

How would SCMaglev address concerns about our schools' structures, personnel, and students associated with the impact of a high-speed, oscillating magnetic field train running under them?

There are so many concerns that clearly have not been addressed by BWRR. It amazes me why this project is still being promoted and most likely by people who would make a lot of money from contracts and building.

Legislators may want to consider the possibility of the SCMaglev project coming to a halt before its completion (it would take at least 10 years to build). With a lengthy schedule for building, rising costs, delays, permitting, and climate impacts as the years go on, what should happen if this project should come to a

halt? Maryland will be left with devastated areas, and costly funding for mitigation. These funds are needed now to clear transportation choices.

Directing any state funding to SCMaglev and BWRR would be hurtful to the other great needs we have now. No other state has accepted such a project, and no other country has either except for a project in Japan. That should provide great unease.

The SCMaglev project would only increase our climate problems as they will destroy communities and green spaces and its emissions will damage human health.

SCMaglev is unaffordable for most Marylanders. A \$40-80 ticket for a one-way trip to one of three locations including the cost of driving to SCMaglev, the time and parking is expensive. So many Marylanders will be excluded. We need equitable, assessable transportation infrastructure.