

Owen Kelley The Federal Railroad Administration fa

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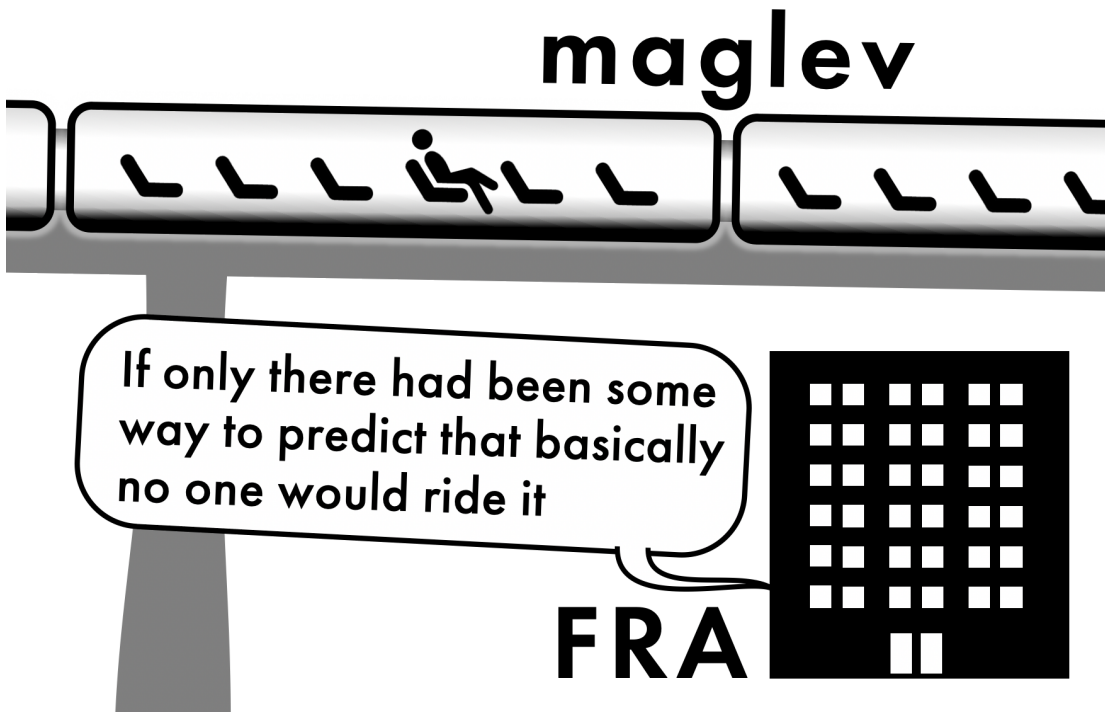
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The Federal Railroad Administration falls for an excessively high forecast of how many trips would be made on the maglev

21
MAY 2021

by Owen A Kelley | posted in: Greenbelt News, Transportation |

Reference data suggest that the official ridership forecast is more than a factor of ten too high for the proposed Baltimore–Washington maglev



A cartoon depicting the question: Is the maglev's official ridership forecast accurate?

With the maglev public-comment period drawing to a close, many residents in the area are rushing to submit their comments in time. Greenbelt Online offers this last blog post about the maglev before the comment period ends. Instructions for submitting your comments are available [here](#). This blog post discusses the official forecast of the maglev's ridership. Prior articles in this series covered what fraction of Washington-area residents would find the maglev ticket price worth the travel time saved and the climate-change impact of building and operating the maglev. The entire analysis is contained in the following PDF file: [kelley202108.magRider](#).

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It would be a scandal to spend 17 billion dollars to build a new rail line if one could predict that the train would run mostly empty. There are hints that this disaster might unfold if a magnetic-levitation rail line were built between Baltimore and Washington, DC. Most people call this train, the “maglev.” [1]

The official ridership forecast for the Baltimore-Washington maglev is stated in the project’s draft environmental impact statement. The draft impact statement, however, merely copies its ridership forecast from a contractor’s report, a report that the public is not allowed to read. This secrecy makes it more difficult to double-check the official ridership forecast but it does not make it impossible. If an approximate answer is sufficient, then only a few mathematical steps are needed to derive a ridership forecast that is independent of the official forecast.

The accuracy of the official ridership forecast matters because the maglev’s draft impact statement relies on the ridership forecast in order to quantify the various benefits of operating the maglev. The number of people riding the maglev determines the revenue from ticket sales, the financial solvency of the maglev operator, the amount of road-congestion prevented, the reduction in car-generated air pollution, and the number of jobs created because of maglev operations.[2]

It is unclear how low ridership would have to be to make the maglev worthless. The draft impact statement ignores this question. Would this threshold be crossed if the official ridership forecast were, say, twice as high as would be reasonable? The analysis below suggests that the official ridership forecast is more than ten times greater than can be supported by several datasets that describe the region’s travel patterns.[3]

Background

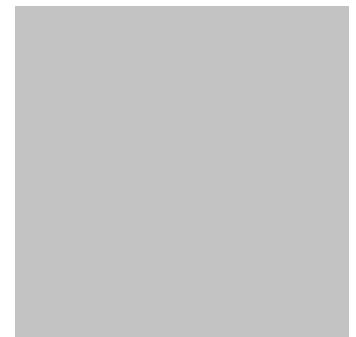
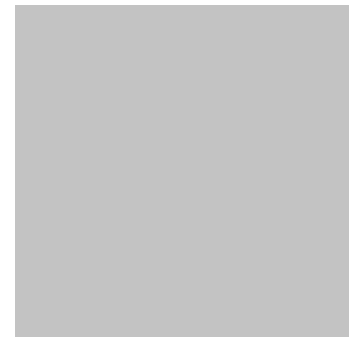
In January 2021, the Federal Railroad Administration published the maglev’s draft environmental impact statement. The document describes ridership as a “key metric” for determining impacts of operating the proposed maglev. Bizarrely, the document uses only 6 out of its 3,000 pages to describe its ridership forecasting method. Such a brief discussion of such an important topic is odd. The draft impact statement provides so little detail that the official ridership forecast is not reproducible.[4]

Worse yet, it appears that the Federal Railroad Administration merely copied its ridership numbers from a contractor’s report. The contracting company is named Louis Berger.

In the draft impact statement, there is no evidence that the Federal Railroad Administration commissioned an independent review of the Louis Berger ridership report or had its own staff perform an internal review of it. The draft impact statement does mention one review of the Louis Berger ridership report, but that review suffers from at least the appearance of a conflict of interest. That review was conducted by the company that wants to built the maglev, i.e., Baltimore Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR). [5]

By republishing Louis Berger’s numbers in the draft impact statement, the Federal Railroad Administration has transformed Louis Berger’s numbers into the project’s official ridership forecast.

During most of the public-comment period for the maglev’s draft impact statement, the Louis Berger ridership report was completely hidden from the public. The company that wants to build the maglev, BWRR, was allowed to see the Louis Berger report, but not the public or elected officials. Toward the end of the comment period, the Federal Railroad Administration made public a heavily redacted copy of the Louis Berger report. The information relevant to the present article, for example, was completely blanked out in this redacted copy.[6]





The proposed maglev would have only three stops: downtown Washington, downtown Baltimore, and the Baltimore/Washington International (BWI) airport. The present paper examines travel between the two urban centers first and subsequently examines travel from urban center to BWI airport.

The maglev's draft impact statement says that most of the maglev's ridership would be people traveling between the two cities rather than people who are flying out of or in to BWI airport.

In addition, the draft impact statement says that most maglev trips would be "diverted" not "induced." A diverted maglev trip is a maglev trip that the customer would make by another form of transportation if the maglev were not built. In contrast, an induced maglev trip is a trip that would only occur if the maglev were built. As a practice, transportation planners divide total ridership into diverted and induced travel. The present article examines only diverted trips because they are easier to estimate than induced trips.

The calculation of diverted trips starts with a recent travel survey. The travel survey states how many trips are made between Washington and Baltimore, and the survey was published in 2020 by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.[7]

The relevant number to extract from the travel survey is the number of trips within the maglev service area: 18,956 one-way trips per day. As discussed in the [Appendix](#) of the present article, this number depends on which jurisdictions are determined to be within the maglev's ridership area. These jurisdictions are listed in an article that the present author wrote titled "The Maglev would serve a small geographic area." In these jurisdictions, most residents could save time by riding the maglev rather than driving between Baltimore and Washington. In this way, the maglev would serve three jurisdictions at the southern end of the maglev line: the District of Columbia, the City of Alexandria, and Arlington County. The maglev would serve two jurisdictions at northern end of the line: the City of Baltimore and Baltimore County.[8]

The 18,956-trip estimate is based on data collected in 2018, but this number can be extrapolated to 2045, the year for which the maglev's official ridership forecast is intended to apply. To extrapolate from 2018 to 2045 one may use a 0.93% increase in travel per year between Baltimore and Washington as proposed in the maglev's draft impact statement.[9]

The next step is to multiply by the fraction of the population that makes enough money that the travel time saved on the maglev would seem worth the maglev ticket price. In an earlier article titled "Maglev riders would come from the wealthiest 2% of the Baltimore-Washington population," the author showed that about 2% of the population earns this much.[10]

The schematic diagram below shows how these factors are combined to arrive at an unofficial forecast that 178,000 one-way trips would be diverted to the maglev in 2045. The diagram also shows the official forecast for this portion of the maglev ridership: 17.6 million one-way maglev trips. To be clear, both the official forecast and the just-derived unofficial forecast are both forecasts for diverted maglev trips in 2045, excluding BWI airport customers. The official forecast is approximately one hundred times greater than the independent, unofficial forecast ($100 \approx 17.6 \div 0.178$).[11]

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A schematic diagram showing how the unofficial forecast is calculated for the number of diverted travelers is calculated.

Downtown to Airport

The preceding section considered non-airport travel and this section considers airport travel. In both cases, the official ridership forecast in the draft impact statement is much higher than the unofficial forecast derived in the present article.

At the Baltimore/Washington International (BWI) airport, a maglev station is proposed immediately adjacent to the airport's main terminal where the hourly parking garage now stands. The Maryland Aviation Administration reported that BWI airport had 26.933 million arrivals and departures in 2019.[12]

The first task is to determine what portion of BWI customers would save time if they used the maglev to travel to or from the airport. Those Washington area residents who would save time riding the maglev to or from BWI are those who live in DC, Arlington, or Alexandria. Most City of Baltimore residents, but not most Baltimore County residents, could save time by riding the maglev to BWI. Approximately 21% of the region's population lives in the four above-mentioned jurisdictions.[13]



airport trips. The first factor extrapolates the 2019 measured trips to 2045, the year of the official maglev ridership forecast. The second factor is 0.02, the portion of the population that is wealthy enough to find the maglev travel-time savings worth the maglev ticket price.

After combining these factors, the result is an unofficial forecast of 143,000 one-way maglev trips in 2045 by BWI customers traveling to or from the airport on the proposed maglev. Add these 143,000 airport trips to the 178,000 non-airport trips derived in the previous section to arrive at the total number of maglev trips that represent travel diverted from other forms of transportation in 2045. The sum of these two numbers is 321,000 trips, which is far less than the official forecast of 20.6 million trips.

To be clear, the official and unofficial forecasts are both estimates of the number of diverted maglev trips that would be made in 2045. The official forecast is a factor of 64 times greater than the independent, unofficial forecast that the present article derives ($64 \approx 20.6 \div 0.321$).^[14]

Commuters

The official ridership forecast is far too high based on the analysis presented so far that uses publicly available reference datasets. Because it is a serious charge to claim that the Federal Railroad Administration has been fooled into republishing a grossly implausible ridership forecast, this section examines yet another reference dataset. This third dataset confirms the pattern seen so far, as explained below.

Data from the Census Bureau show that 13,091 people commuted between Baltimore and Washington in 2015, the most recent year for which these data are available. This number is the sum of the people who live in Baltimore and work in Washington and the people who live in Washington and work in Baltimore. As discussed in Kelley (2021 March 25), these commuters have the District of Columbia, Arlington, or Alexandria at the southern end of their commute and Baltimore County or the City of Baltimore at the northern end of their commute.^[15]

The annual number of one-way commuting trips can be estimated by multiplying the number of commuters by two trips per workday and by the average number of workdays in a year.^[16]

Multiply this number of trips by the same two factors used in the previous sections of the present article. First, use a 0.93%-per-year increase in travel between the year that the data was collected, 2015, and the maglev forecast year, which is 2045. Second, multiply by 0.02 because only about 2% of the population is wealthy enough that the travel-time saved on the maglev would be worth the maglev ticket price. The result is an unofficial forecast that 147,000 one-way maglev trips would be made in 2045 by diverted commuters, commuters who switched from some other form of transportation to ride the maglev.

In contrast, the official forecast is that diverted commuters would make 5.2 million one-way maglev trips per year. The official forecast is 35 times higher than the unofficial forecast ($35 \approx 5.2 \div 0.147$).^[17]

To review, the present article has examined three reference datasets. All three of them provide evidence that the official ridership forecast for the proposed maglev is implausibly high. The official forecast in the draft impact statement is more than ten times higher than the reference datasets can support.

Prior Studies Suggest Low Ridership

There is nothing surprising about the present article finding that only a few travelers would prefer the proposed Baltimore-Washington maglev over other forms of transportation.



Academies report in 1991 and Federal Railroad Administration reports in 1993 and 2005. This result applies to all types of high-speed rail lines whether or not they use maglev technology. The proposed Baltimore-Washington maglev would be only 36 miles long, which is much shorter than the 100-mile cutoff.[18]

It is surprising that the Federal Railroad Administration chose not to mention the findings of these earlier studies in the January 2021 draft impact statement for the proposed Baltimore-Washington maglev. The regulations that implement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) require that an impact statement evaluate all relevant points of view.[19]

The most natural interpretation of these earlier studies is that a maglev shorter than 100 miles would not be economically viable. For this reason, a short-run maglev line would be an invalid subject for an environmental impact statement. To quote NEPA regulations, the subject of an environmental impact statement must:

have independent utility or independent significance, i.e., be usable and be a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made [20]

Based on the analysis in the present article, a maglev between Baltimore and Washington would have so few riders that it would lack the “independent utility” that is required in the above-quoted regulation.

Conclusion

The present article has examined the official forecast for the number of trips that would be made on the proposed Baltimore-Washington maglev. The official forecast is stated in the draft environmental impact statement that the Federal Railroad Administration published in January 2021.

The analysis in the present article finds that the official ridership forecast is implausibly high. The official forecast is more than an order of magnitude higher than what reference datasets can support.

The official forecast is 20.6 million one-way maglev trips that would be made each year by travelers diverted from other forms of transportation. In contrast, various reference datasets examined in the present article suggest that a much smaller number of diverted travelers is more likely: 0.32 million one-way maglev trips per year. A diverted traveler is someone who would make the trip by another form of transportation if the maglev were not built. The draft impact statement reports that the great majority of maglev travelers would be diverted from other forms of transportation.

If the official ridership forecast is higher than warranted, then it would prevent the draft impact statement from helping the public and elected officials evaluate the harm and benefits associated with the proposed maglev. The draft impact statement relies on the ridership forecast to derive its estimate for, among other things, the maglev's revenue, the solvency of the maglev operator, the air-pollution reduction, the road-congestion improvement, and the jobs created by maglev operations.

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MWCOG, 2019: *2019 State of the Commute Survey: Technical Survey Report*. Commuter Connection Program of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (NCRTPB) part of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, 219 pp. States on pages ii and 8 that teleworking reduces by 9.7% the number of commuters trips in a typical weekday in the Washington region.



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Notes

[1] \$15–17 billion: Appendix D4, Table D4-8, pg. D-21.

[2] Revenue from maglev ticket sales in “SCMAGLEV annual fare cost” row of Appendix D4, Table D4-28, pg. D-44. Road congestion: Kelley 2021 Feb 10. Air pollution: Appendix D4, Table D4-40, pg. D-51, and Kelley 2021 April 11. 390–440 jobs created by maglev operations: Chapter 4.6, pg. 4.6-8.

[3] Many ridership forecasts off $\pm 30\%$: Hartgen (2013). A factor of 10 error would be unusually large.

[4] Six-page-long ridership-model description citing zero references: Appendix D2, pg. B-104 to D-109. Key metric: Chapter 4.2, pg. 4.2-6. 654 pages in main text and 2399 pages in the appendices, so the total page count is 3,053. To count pages, use the mdls command in the MacOS terminal: `mdls -n kMDItemNumberOfPages *.pdf | awk '{print $3; sum += $3} END {print sum}'`.

[5] The maglev DEIS cites the 2018 Louis Berger “Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV Project Final Ridership Report” in Appendix D4 (footnote to Table D4-19, pg. D-36) and in Chapter 4.6 (pg. 4.6-3, footnotes 9). The DEIS describes 3 steps that the “project sponsor” took to check the ridership forecast (Appendix D2, pg. B-104), but no steps that the Federal Railroad Administration took. The Federal Railroad Administration is a regulatory agency, so one of its essential functions is to double-check statements made by project sponsors, i.e., by the industry that the agency is supposed to be regulating. From the page following the title page of the draft impact statement: “The Project Sponsor, Baltimore Washington Rapid Rail, LLC proposes to construct and operate an SCMAGLEV system between Baltimore, MD and Washington, D.C.” See the discussion in Voulgaris (2019) on how a forecast can be affected by the biases of the forecaster.



Administration (MTA) 17 March 2021, press release, <https://www.mta.maryland.gov/articles/304>. Redacted copy of the 2018 Louis Berger ridership report released on April 23, 2021, at <https://bwmaglev.info/index.php/project-documents/deis#ridership-studies>.

[7] See the Appendix of the present article for details about the Regional Travel Survey.

[8] Ridership area article: 25 March 2021: <https://www.greenbeltonline.org/the-maglev-would-serve-a-small-geographic-area/>.

[9] 0.93% annual growth: Appendix D2, pg. C-106.

[10] 2% article: 2 May 2021: <https://www.greenbeltonline.org/maglev-wealth/>.

[11] Official ridership forecast for diverted non-airport travelers calculated as diverted travelers contributing 20.579 million trips (Chapter 4.2, Table 4.2-3, pg. 4.2-7) multiplied by 85.5% of maglev trips would be by people other than BWI airport customers (Appendix D4, Table D4-19, pg. D-35). $17.6 \text{ million} = 20.579 \text{ million} \cdot 0.855$.

[12] MD Aviation Administration December 2020.

[13] 21%: see the Census Bureau data described in the Appendix of the present article.

[14] Official forecast of 20.579 million trips by diverted travelers: Chapter 4.2, Table 4.2-3, pg. 4.2-7.

[15] 13,091 commuters: See the American Commuter Survey data in the Appendix of the present article.

[16] How many trips the average commuter would make in a year: Appendix of present article.

[17] Official forecast for diverted commuters calculated as 20.579 million trips by diverted travelers (Chapter 4.2, Table 4.2-3, pg. 4.2-7) multiplied by 25.4% of maglev trips being made by commuters (Appendix D4, Table D4-19, pg. D-35). $5.2 \text{ million} = 20.579 \text{ million} \cdot 0.254$.

[18] 33–36-mile length stated in maglev DEIS: FRA 2021, Chapter 3, pg. 3-18 and 3-19. National Academies (1991), Figure ES-1, pg. 7. Car's advantages over rail: FRA 1997, pg. 7-4; FRA 2008, pg. 6-7; and FRA 2005, pg. ES-3.

[19] Eccleston 2014, pg. 258–259. NEPA regulation 2005 Section 1502.9(a) states, "the [lead author] agency shall make every effort to disclose and discuss at appropriate points in the draft statement all major points of view on the environmental impacts."

[20] 23 CFR § 771.111, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/23/771.111>.

About the Author: *Owen Kelley has a science background, and in his free time, he enjoys exploring and writing about the forests around Greenbelt. In recent years, he has written several articles about the proposed Baltimore Washington maglev.*

Disclaimer: *Kelley is writing in his capacity as a individual citizen examining a non-partisan issue of interest to the public. If errors are suspected, please contact him at okelley@gmu.edu.*

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Owen Kelley is an atmospheric scientist who has lived in Greenbelt for 25 years. He writes occasionally for the Greenbelt Online blog and Greenbelt News Review.

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SUBMIT TESTIMONY HB040 feb2024.pdf

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Position: FAV

Testimony in Favor of HB0170 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System (Cross-file SB0079)

Submitting: Catherine Plaisant

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: 2.22.2024 at 1:00 p.m.

To: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

My name is Catherine Plaisant, speaking as an individual. I am writing in support of HB0170, sponsored by Delegate Nicole Williams, because magnetic levitation transportation is a long-rejected impractical technology which – compared to traditional high-speed trains - has no environmental benefits, and lacks the flexibility needed to improve the connectivity of our transportation network.

My objections are inevitably connected to the proposed MAGLEV project. Here are a few:

1) Lack of connectivity

Magnetic levitation transportation systems are a bad choice because they are so inflexible - by design. Lines cannot be shared with a regular train system, even for a few minutes to connect to existing stations. They do not share stations either. Their design is so inflexible that they cannot even bend to use available abandoned industrial land for train yards. **Sensible trains improvements enhance the connectivity of networks, a magnetic levitation transportation system cannot achieve that.**

2) Emissions / energy use

The Federal Railroad Administration found that operating the Proposed Baltimore-Washington Maglev would **increase greenhouse gas emissions**. Compared to the traditional trains (including the standard high-speed trains in used today in the rest of the world) a **magnetic levitation system is an energy hog**.

In addition, the destruction of wild land, reduced carbon sequestration, destruction of streams, pollution of ground water from tunnels, noise pollution, etc. will more than counterbalance the benefit of taking a relatively small number of additional cars removed the road.

3) Cost

All the trains in the world require government subsidies. Having different train systems running in parallel is a financial aberration. Maryland taxpayers will be left to pay for this mistake. Only a few wealthy residents will benefit.

4) Safety

The safety record of Maglev technology is non-existent, despite being an old technology. The MAGLEV project is like a Boeing 737 MAX, ready for a fiasco. In

addition, we have quickly forgotten that terrorism LOVES such high-profile vulnerabilities.

5) Jobs

The only valid comments I have heard in favor of MAGLEV are that jobs would be created, but please remember that **ANY** expensive transportation project creates job, so job creating is not an argument for magnetic levitation. The state should focus on creating **jobs for sensible projects, not magnetic levitation projects.**

6) Ridership estimates

The number of people driving every day from downtown DC to downtown Baltimore is actually very small. Their impact on the overall daily peak-hour congestion on our highways is quite limited. **The estimated ridership of the MAGLEV project is extrapolated from an extremely small number of actual recorded origin-destination trips and therefore highly uncertain, and has been debunked by scientist Dr. Owen Kelley.**

On the other hand, any magnetic transportation system between DC and Baltimore WILL, with absolute certainty:

- Divert funding for the public transportation we use and need to get to work.
- Bulldoze over public lands which should be protected
- Worsen environmental justice if built between DC and Baltimore.
- Reduce the quality of life of a large number of Marylanders (water quality, noise, vibrations, etc.)
- Irreversibly damages lands listed as priority for protection

Refuse to pay for Magnetic Levitation Transportation Systems, **instead** I hope the general assembly will focus on improving **existing infrastructures to improve their capacity.**

To close, I will relate an example of **my experience** with MD public transportation:

While working at the University of Maryland until recently I would take the MARC train in College Park to go to the School of Medicine in Baltimore: an old diesel train arrives, a conductor opens a single door and comes down with a stool for passengers to use. This is slow, polluting, 19th century transportation! MARC may be planned to be improved, but instead we can dramatically revamp the MARC trains and lines, decuple capacity, add more direct services, and attract many new commuters. Who knows... maybe even bring electricity?

I ask that HB 170 be given a favorable vote and moved out of committee.

Sincerely,

Catherine Plaisant, PhD
8G Laurel Hill Rd. Greenbelt MD 20770
301 529-1089

HB0170_MAGLEV_MLC_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY FOR HB0170

State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Williams

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0170 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

The MAGLEV project is a very divisive project in our state. It was conceived in much the same way that we have conceived most of our transportation projects in the past decade – with the thought of how the wealthy will benefit and with no thought about the low- to mid- income people who would suffer.

The MAGLEV would tear through already overburdened communities in Prince George’s County and have no real benefit for them. No stops anywhere in the county. This just can’t continue to happen.

This bill prohibits the use of state funds for the MAGLEV. We could not agree more that, in its current form, there should be no money available for it. However, we do not believe in precluding the state from ever having a MAGLEV, so we propose an amendment that if a future MAGLEV project was conceived following proper environmental guidance and environmental justice guidance, the project should be able to move forward with state funding.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report in committee.

CSG Support HB170 Maglev Prohibit Appropriations_2

Uploaded by: Cheryl Cort

Position: FAV

February 20, 2024

Hon. Delegate Marc Korman
Chair of the Environment and Transportation Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Position: Favorable HB 170 - State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

Dear Chair Korman:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 170. Please accept this testimony on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the leading organization advocating for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the Washington, DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

HB 170 would prohibit the State from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation transportation system in the State. We support this bill because the proponents of the Maglev project claim that it does not require public subsidies. Thus, this bill ensures that the public will not be subjected to paying for costs associated with the planning of this private investor-driven project.

We have been strong supporters of major rail improvements in the Northeast corridor, but the proposed Baltimore-Washington Superconducting Magnetic Levitation (SCMAGLEV) project is the wrong technology and design for the Washington-Baltimore corridor and the NE Corridor as a whole. Instead of allowing public subsidies to be expended on Maglev, we urge the State to lead coordinated efforts on significant investments in both the Amtrak and commuter rail improvement programs.

We are concerned about the project's negative effect on existing taxpayer investments in transit. The project is already diverting attention from repairing and improving our existing MARC and Amtrak infrastructure. If public funding is required for the Maglev, it could divert hundreds of millions of dollars in addition to fare revenue lost due to potential reduced ridership on Amtrak and MARC. The Maglev is a potential public-private partnership, and recent experience with P3s in Maryland and other states suggests that public funding will be required.

The Maglev project would have a negative impact on racial and social equity. Construction would plow through majority Black Prince George's County, but the residents of Prince George's County would not be able to take advantage of the project, since the technology and design speed are such that there will only be stops in DC, at BWI Airport, and at Penn Station in Baltimore. Environmental Justice (EJ) communities would be disproportionately impacted.

Investing in the Maryland MARC and Amtrak NE Corridor expansion plans would more effectively serve the transit needs of our region and the NE Corridor. Upgrades to the existing rail system could also more easily be extended to other destinations like New York and Boston, than would be the case with Maglev which would need entirely new right-of-way through the very densely developed Northeast. Existing rail stations are located in more central and well-established transit hubs, like DC's Union Station.

A much more cost-effective solution would be to invest in improving our existing infrastructure and upgrade over time to high-speed rail standards. In conclusion, we urge you to pursue upgrades to the nation's existing rail infrastructure, including high-speed rail, in lieu of Maglev.

We ask for a favorable report for this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl Cort', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cheryl Cort

Policy Director

20240222 - Support HB0170 - Oral - MCRT-Woomer 2.p

Uploaded by: Dan Woomer

Position: FAV

Title: **MCRT & CATS Supports Maryland General Assembly House Bill 0170**

Speaker: Daniel E. Woomer
Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit (MCRT) &
Citizens Against the SCMaglev (CATS)

Hearing: Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 250
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024

Time: 1:00 pm

Oral Testimony:

I'm Daniel E. Woomer, Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit board member, and member of Citizens Against the SCMaglev, here in **SUPPORT** of House Bill 170. I have also provided written testimony.

Mr. Rogers has repeatedly stated the SCMaglev will not require taxpayer funds. House Bill 170 puts his statement on the legislative record, WITH the one caveat that FUNDS CAN BE USED for administrative costs.¹

Baltimore City, AA and PG Counties, D.C. and federal agencies, and numerous community, environmental and environmental justice organizations have identified how building and operating the SCMaglev will bring irreparable environmental harm, threaten the health of

¹ The argument made by BWRR CEO Wayne Rogers for his opposition to an earlier version of HB0170 was the earlier version would block the normal administrative processes for such actions as permitting.

communities, residents, wildlife, and disproportionately impact poorer minority communities.

Today, my testimony is focused on two BWRR claims – Ridership and Jobs

On Ridership –

BWRR claims the ridership will cover the operating costs.

Where are the analyses to support this claim?

Analyses by the Maryland Public Policy Institute, the Cato Institute, and by Dr. Owen Kelley of GW University, challenge the highly inflated ridership numbers. The ridership will likely be one tenth of BWRR’s projection, as will the revenue stream. An August 2023 *The Daily Record* article reported Maryland was the sixth highest state to lose high-earning (\$200K) households. Between 2020 and 2021, Washington, D.C. was losing high-earners faster than any other state. These are the people most likely to use the SCMaglev. Add this to the decreasing Baltimore City population, and the huge rise in remote working, SCMaglev’s ridership projections are unbelievable.

On Jobs –

Today, you will again hear about all of the jobs the SCMaglev will create.

In 2017 the number was 75,000, by 2022 the number now is 200,000.

Where are the economic assumptions, data sources, and analyses that support these job creation numbers?

A \$27.8 million federal grant was awarded in 2015 to study SCMaglev feasibility. The ridership, revenue, and job projections were funded by tax dollars. Why haven't we seen these analyses we have paid for?

In Summary:

MCRT and others have assembled a long list of reasons why the SCMaglev should be stopped before any more tax payer dollars are wasted. MCRT submissions, numerous position papers, articles, and presentations can be found on the MCRT website (www.mcrt-action.org).

MCRT is available to meet with you and your staff.

Thank you.

20240222 - Support HB0170 - Written - MCRT- Woomer

Uploaded by: Dan Woomer

Position: FAV

Title: **Support Maryland General Assembly House Bill 0170 State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System**
(Cross-file SB0079)

Testimony by:

Daniel E. Woomer
Board member - Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit (MCRT)
Member - Citizens Against the SCMaglev (CATS)

Hearing: Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024

Time: 1:00 pm

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

Summary:

As a Board member of the Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit (MCRT) and member of the Citizens Against the SCMaglev (CATS), we join with Delegate Williams to support this session's House Bill 0170 – "Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System" which prohibits "the State and certain units and instrumentalities of the State from using any State appropriated funds for the building and operating of a magnetic levitation transportation system in Maryland; providing that the prohibition "does not apply to expenditures for the salaries of personnel assigned to review permits or other forms of approval for a magnetic levitation transportation system."

Building the SCMaglev train will destroy the last large protected green areas on the east coast and bring irreparable environmental harm to surrounding areas, potentially threatening the health of our residents, and it will require government subsidies to build, maintain, and operate the system. It is very unlikely that revenues generated by ridership will cover the maintenance and operation cost of running this train. MCRT's and other's research have come to this same conclusion. Coupled with the budget reduction in transportation for 2024, Maryland taxpayer funds would be better spent on high-priority transportation infrastructure projects that benefit all Maryland's residents, not just the few wealthy who can afford the cost to ride the SCMaglev. While I, MCRT and CATS oppose the building of the SCMaglev, we strongly support the continued enhancements of existing transportation systems such as MARC and Amtrak, which benefit all Marylanders.

Testimony:

Good afternoon. My name is Daniel E. Woomer, I live in Linthicum Heights which is in the northern portion of Anne Arundel County. I am the past president and a current Board member of the MCRT, as well as longtime member of CATS. I am pleased to provide this written testimony to you today in support of HB 0170.

There are many reasons I, MCRT, CATS, our communities, environmental groups, Baltimore City, Washington D.C., and Anne Arundel and Prince George's Counties, as well as several federal agencies are opposed to building the SCMaglev:

- (1) The train will not serve all Marylanders, yet it will destroy communities and green spaces and its emissions will damage human health.
- (2) There are unanswered questions about the actual safety of the train itself.
- (3) It will generate insufficient revenue, therefore requiring government subsidies.
- (4) It will follow previous world experiences with such systems, many of which have failed or are being maintained with large government subsidies.
- (5) The Northeast Maglev (TNEM) and Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) have made many claims about jobs and revenues but have yet to share their analyses supporting these claims.
- (6) The need for far more high-value and equitable transportation infrastructure improvements, such as MARC and Amtrak, far outweigh expending excessive funds on building and operating the SCMaglev.

(1) SCMaglev Does Not Serve Marylanders, Yet Destroys Our Communities and Green Spaces.

The SCMaglev project will result in:

- Detrimental impacts on swaths of homes, businesses, historic sights, streams, waterways, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay, as well as greenspaces throughout Prince George's County with the erection of the elevated sections of the SCMaglev.
- The destruction and/or disruption of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC), NASA's Optic Research Center, and the Patuxent Research Reserve (PRR), while bringing industrial level of pollution to the local streams, wetlands, the Patuxent River, and the Chesapeake Bay.

Note: In a letter dated December 22, 2023, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has received and reviewed BWRR's Water Quality Certification (WQC) and announced MDE intended to deny BWRR's WQC.¹ Subsequently, BWRR withdrew their WQC request.

– AND –

¹ To read the MDE letter, go to: https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/faf63c_9f3ca64e47ba489aba224e4473bf2d2a.pdf

On August 26, 2021 the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) paused their review of BWRR's SCMaglev Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the second time. The review is still on pause.

- The potential disruption of the Anne Arundel County aquifer.
- The potential release of toxins, carcinogens, and radon gas collected in the SCMaglev tunneled sections into our communities through their surface ventilation facilities.
- Concerns about our schools' structures, personnel, and students associated with the impact of a high-speed, oscillating magnetic field train running under them.

Note: the Anne Arundel Board of Education noted their written objection to building and operating the SCMaglev on November 1, 2017.

- Increased vehicle traffic with the construction and operation of the SCMaglev facilities and track maintenance equipment on I-95 and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway.
- With only one stop in Anne Arundel County and no stops in Prince George's County, the SCMaglev provides little to no benefit to the residents and businesses in our counties, yet these counties will face the greatest burden of the disruption and destruction.

(2) Unanswered Questions About the Actual Safety of the Train Itself Remain.

- Past proposals to build maglev systems in Florida, Pennsylvania, and Maryland using the German system were not approved for good reason.
- Despite certification by the German government that their maglev system was safe, on September 22, 2006, 70 percent of the passengers were killed and the rest injured in a maglev accident in Lathen, Germany.
- The Japanese government seeks to assure us of the safety of their SCMaglev. However, the number of passengers carried to date on their test track far less than the typical number carried by the Washington Metro (pre-COVID-19) in a single day.

Note: Japanese success with their wheel-rail trains does not automatically transfer to maglev technology.

- Justifications for the ongoing building of their SCMaglev are being questioned in Japan. The planned 2027 date for starting the first operation of the Tokyo to Nagoya line is unlikely to be met. This would make the United States the first place where the safety of SCMaglev technology would be tested in a high-frequency commercial operation.
- The Japanese SCMaglev has many unresolved safety issues that need to be addressed. Safety Rules of Particular Applicability (RPA) need to be developed by the FRA before the project is authorized.
- The crashworthiness of the vehicles must be assessed for the safety of the passengers if something goes wrong. The SCMaglev should not evade the safety rules now required for Amtrak, MARC, or any train system operating in the United States. Promoters of the SCMaglev argue that the computer systems will prevent a crash, but so did the German government before that fateful day when 70 percent of passengers were killed in the Lathen maglev accident.

- The risk of the levitated SCMaglev train rising out of the guideway must be evaluated. What would happen should the train hit a small object that momentarily lifts the front end while travelling at over 300 miles-per-hour? Currently there are no physical restraints to prevent the train from rising out of the guideway.
- Below 93 miles per hour, the train will ride on retractable rubber tires. This raises many safety issues. If there is a power interruption, the rubber wheels may need to immediately support the train travelling at over 300 miles-per-hour before it comes to a stop, which is twice the speed of a commercial aircraft during landing.
- The dangers from the electromagnetic radiation need to be addressed. The BWRR Alternatives Report (November 2018) stated that people underneath the guideway “. . . need to maintain a minimum distance of 20 feet below the magnets . . .”

(3) SCMaglev Will Generate Insufficient Revenue Requiring Government Subsidies.

Having followed the SCMaglev project since its initial announcement, it is very difficult to see how this system will generate the revenues needed to operate and maintain itself without the need for government subsidies. We all have received mixed signals for the TNEM and BWRR leadership, who at one time state that all the funds needed for maintenance and operation (M&O) will be generated by ridership, and at another that any system such as the one proposed requires private and public support, as in the use of tax dollars to provide financial support. Independent research by Dr. Owen Kelly, of George Washington University, seriously challenges BWRR ridership statements.

Dr. Owen’s published research, *Ridership Revisited: The Official Ridership Forecast for the Proposed Baltimore-Washington Maglev Is a Factor of Ten Too High*², provides a “deep dive” employing transparent methodology and the use of published Census data to project the likely SCMaglev ridership for the Baltimore to Washington, D.C. segment. His findings reinforce the report prepared by Ms. Carol Park³ of the Center for Business and Economic Competitiveness at the Maryland Public Policy Institute which discussed the demographics of Baltimore City. She argues the economic basis to support the SCMaglev does not exist as it does in Japan. In addition, Randal O’Toole of the Cato Institute states: “Clearly, the main users of the maglev line will be bureaucrats and lobbyists who will have someone else (mainly taxpayers) pay their way. What is less clear is why ordinary taxpayers should pay to build a line that they won’t ever use . . .”⁴

² Kelly PhD, Owen. Ridership Revisited: The Official Ridership Forecast for the Proposed Baltimore-Washington Maglev Is a Factor of Ten Too High. 2021. <https://www.greenbeltonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/kelley202108.magrider.pdf>

³ Park, Carol. Report from the Center for Business and Economic Competitiveness at the Maryland Public Policy Institute - Lessons from Asia for the Northeast SCMaglev. Originally published in the Daily Record. December 7, 2018. Copy provided attached to this testimony.

⁴ O’Toole, Randal. Maglev to Destroy Habitat, Climate. April 6, 2021. <https://www.cato.org/blog/maglev-destroy-habitat-climate>.

To date, no major public rail system in the world operates without government subsidy. Amtrak is one of the best (pre-COVID), generating revenues that covered most of its annual M&O costs, and has shown improvement over the past decade, requiring a smaller percentage of M&O to be subsidized. While Amtrak openly provides its cost versus revenue analyses and projections, we have yet to see such projections and analyses from TNEM and BWRR to justify their revenue statements.

In their Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Water Quality Certification (WQC) submission, BWRR stated the projected annual ridership between Baltimore and Washington, D.C., would be between 11 and 12 million passengers. Really? MARC operates three lines in Maryland. The Brunswick line starts in western Maryland, and includes passengers living in West Virginia, with the terminus at Union Station in Washington, D.C. The Penn line starts on Maryland's northern border with Pennsylvania (Perryville) and has passengers living in Delaware and Pennsylvania, runs through Baltimore City terminating at Union Station Washington, D.C. The Camden line runs from Camden Yard station in Baltimore City terminating at Union Station Washington, D.C. The pre-Covid ridership high for all three lines totaled approximately 8.2 million passengers. Add the high pre-Covid Amtrak ridership from Baltimore City to Washington, D.C., the total number of passengers comes to approximately 9 million. When compared to MARC and Amtrak actual ridership numbers, BWRR's 11 to 12 million passenger projection lacks validity. BWRR's ridership numbers are simply unbelievable.

One of the primary analyses as part of the \$27 million federal grant to study the feasibility of the system (a requirement for any business) is to determine if sufficient revenues can be generated to cover the M&O costs. Since the majority (approximately 80 percent) of the research to produce the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was funded by tax dollars, you as legislators and we as taxpayers have the right to know if the analyses on SCMaglev income and income sources versus costs for building, loan management, maintenance, and operation are financially sound. We all, you as legislators and we as the impacted public, should have a clear picture of the level of subsidies needed to keep the SCMaglev system financially afloat before we make the decision to approve it being built. It is long past time that this information is made available to you and for our review.

While Amtrak openly provides its cost versus revenue analyses and projections, we have yet to see such projections and analyses from the TNEM and BWRR to justify their revenue statements.

SCMaglev will likely pull ridership from Amtrak, its rival and competitor in the high-speed train arena, which will require Amtrak subsidies to be increased. In effect, taxpayers, most of whom would not be able to afford a ticket to ride the SCMaglev, will be forced to subsidize two competing systems. Such funds will enrich the private SCMaglev investors, negatively impact existing transportation systems, and pull funding from other needed, more critical transportation infrastructure projects.

Let us remember our own prior experience in looking at a maglev system in Maryland. The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) began to devote funding to the

development and evaluation of a Maglev system in FY2001. At that time, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) commenced the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) for the project as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The final EIS was never published because 2003 and 2004 state-enacted legislation prohibited the funding of the project as the result of the final report of the Task Force to Evaluate the Development and Construction of a Magnetic Levitation Transportation System. In its final report, issued in 2003, the task force noted:

that, among other challenges, a significant amount of funding would be required to implement a Maglev system in Maryland.

It is very likely the SCMaglev will also require such taxpayer funds, and likely far more funding than the previous legislative advisory task force considered excessive in its prior finding.

And two additional issues to call your attention to. First, **High-end Earners are Leaving** as reported in *The Daily Record* on August 7, 2023:

“As the number of Americans filing tax returns with earnings over \$200,000 grows, these earnings are coupled with migration trends that are influencing states’ finances, according to a new report from SmartAsset.⁵ High earners are leaving states such as California and New York, instead choosing to move to states such as Florida and Texas.”⁶

“Maryland was the state with the sixth-largest net outflows of high-earning households, trailing California, New York, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Virginia . . . High earners are leaving Washington D.C. The nation’s capital lost a net total of 2,009 high-earning households between 2020 and 2021. As a percentage of all filers, high earners left D.C. at a faster rate than any state.” As reported by WTOP News on September 21, 2023, “High earners left Washington, D.C., costing the District in “\$3 billion in taxable personal income.”⁷

Second, another factor further reducing the SCMaglev’s potential ridership pool is **Baltimore City’s continued population decline**. At its peak, Baltimore City had a population of approximately 1.2 million. Just since 2010, when TNEM started talking about building and operating the SCMaglev, Baltimore City’s population has declined by 8.2%, as seen in Table 1.

⁵ Villanova, Patrick. “Where High Earners Are Moving – 2023 Study.” July 26, 2023. <https://smartasset.com/data-studies/where-high-earners-moving-2023>.

⁶ Kales, Eli. “Report: Maryland among states with highest loss of high-earning residents.” *The Daily Record*. August 7, 2023. <https://thedailyrecord.com/2023/08/07/report-maryland-among-states-with-highest-loss-of-high-earning-residents/>.

⁷ Cooper, Kyle. “High earners who left DC during pandemic cost city \$3 billion in tax revenue, data reveals.” September 21, 2023. WTOP News. <https://wtop.com/dc/2023/09/high-earners-who-left-dc-during-pandemic-cost-city-3-billion-in-tax-revenue-data-reveals/>.

Year	Population	Year	Population
2010	620,942	2016	616,542
2011	620,493	2017	610,853
2012	623,035	2018	603,241
2013	622,591	2019	594,601
2014	623,833	2020	583,132
2015	622,831	2021	576,498
2016	616,542	2022	569,931

Table 1. Baltimore City’s Population by Year for 2010 through 2022 (estimate as of July 1, 2022)

This fact leads to many questions such as:

- What are the ridership projections considering the impact of the increasing use of teleworking?
- How have the ridership projects changed as a result of agencies and support contractor experiences with maintaining ongoing operations during COVID-19 “lock downs”?
- How much have the ridership projections decreased as a result of the increasing use of telework and the pool of potential riders leaving Baltimore and Washington, D.C.?
- What level of taxpayer subsidy will now be needed to maintain and operate the SCMaglev? What is the projected increase in subsidies?
- What is the projected impact on Amtrak and MARC ridership and their respective subsidy requirements?
- SCMaglev’s funding is reportedly a loan from a Japanese bank; how has COVID-19 loss of potential ridership affected that pledge? With loss of the population pool of potential riders, is Japan as willing to make a \$5 billion loan? If the SCMaglev operation fails, will the United States and we as its taxpayers become accountable for the loan repayments?

(4) SCMaglev Will Follow Previous World Experiences with Such Systems, Many of Which Have Failed or are Being Maintained with Large Government Subsidies.

I again call your attention to a report by Ms. Carol Park, an analyst at the Center for Business and Economic Competitiveness at the Maryland Public Policy Institute entitled: “Lessons from Asia for the Northeast SCMaglev.”⁸ *(A copy is attached for your convenience)*

To quote Ms. Park:

“SCMaglev enthusiasts have been pushing the project despite warnings of significant risks, just like the supporters of the bullet train did in Asia. For instance, the South Korean government built the Seoul-Incheon line despite consistent warnings of inadequate demand. The project was politically, rather than commercially, driven as Korean officials wanted to present a futuristic version of Korea to the international community as part

⁸ Park, Carol. “Transportation Lessons from Asia for the Northeast Maglev.” The Maryland Public Policy Institute. December 7, 2018. www.mdpolicy.org/research/detail/lessons-from-asia-for-the-northeast-maglev?fbclid=IwAR2C1sAfojicOFJ7J6jXCqvtGmKADrtVAopQpP7XRZnc38V25p8G5wWp2s4.

of the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics.”

The line was closed in 2018 because 77 percent of seats continually were unoccupied.

Germany experimented with building a Maglev train. Following several years of development and building, with large and growing annual government subsidies, the lack of ridership, and a horrific crash that killed 70 percent of the passengers and injured the rest, on a system Germany certified as safe, the project was abandoned, the damage to communities and the environment can still be seen today.

For a current example of overpromise and underperformance, look no further than California’s experience with its high-speed rail system, which has become a financial nightmare. With massive overruns, building delays, and homes, businesses, and private properties taken, there is still no working system. The governor finally “pulled the plug” and the initial project, which now has been significantly downsized. However, destruction of farms, vineyards, and personal property has occurred with no value returned to the California community. The severely downsized system is still experiencing massive cost overruns and building delays.

Ms. Park states:

“Supporters of SCMaglev dismiss these concerns. They argue that the success of bullet trains in Japan demonstrate that these hurdles can be overcome. That’s exactly what officials in China, Taiwan and South Korea thought, only to discover that the situation in Japan is unique. Most of Japan’s 128 million inhabitants live in a few densely populated cities. Many of those residents are rich enough to afford expensive train tickets.”

Note: SCMaglev officials have repeatedly stated that ticket prices will be similar to Amtrak’s Acela.

“Compared to Japan, the situation is the polar opposite in Baltimore, where many of the residents who depend on public transit are low-income workers. If these residents are to commute between Baltimore and D.C., they would need an option that is affordable and easily accessible from their homes.” The SCMaglev is neither, whereas MARC provides a reliable and cost-effective transportation system, moving well over 8 million passengers (pre-COVID) into and out of Washington, D.C., annually.”

(5) TNEM and BWRR Have Made Many Claims About Jobs and Revenues But Have Yet to Share the Analyses Supporting These Claims.

- The promoters of high-speed and maglev trains promise lots of jobs. In 2017 it was 75,000, now the number is reported to be 200,000 - **These job numbers are misleading or appear flawed.** The underlying analyses, which has been funded by a federal grant of public tax dollars, needs to be made available for public review.
- Since 2017, we have asked to see the basis of this claim, the work breakdown projections,

and information to substantiate their statements - **We have not seen anything to substantiate BWRR's jobs projection, have you?**

- Jobs created to build the SCMaglev will be short term. Once the system is built between Baltimore and Washington, D.C., the construction jobs in Maryland will end. These jobs will then move north if BWRR gains approval to extend the system to New York and Boston - **Maryland will lose these jobs, and likely many of the laborers, and the related tax revenues as the construction moves to Pennsylvania and New York. In addition, there will be an increase in unemployed support costs until the displaced workers who stay in Maryland find work.**
- If the operation of Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, Patuxent Research Refuge, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Optics Centers are curtailed or shut down, the career, high-paying jobs will be lost from Anne Arundel and Prince George's Counties and the state of Maryland - **The long-term net effect is that Maryland will lose many career, high-paying jobs and their related tax revenue.**
- Many high-speed and maglev train projects across the world have cost far more than promised by the promoters. In some cases (e.g., California's high-speed train fiasco), there has been an increase of many times the original projected cost (to date and growing), requiring increasing amounts of government (i.e., tax dollar) subsidies. - **When the cost is far more than projected, larger tax-dollar subsidies are required and forced on governments.**
- As high-speed and maglev train projects across the world experienced building delays - **Many have experienced protracted schedule overruns and far longer periods of disruption to impacted communities.**
- The tax dollars needed for moving forward with equitable, high-priority transportation infrastructure projects will likely be further downsized or cancelled as funds are used to subsidize the building and operation of the SCMaglev. After the SCMaglev is built, the construction jobs are finished, subsidies will likely be needed to maintain the operation of the system. These tax dollars should be used to expand and enhance public transportation systems, as well as to maintain, repair, or enhance existing bridges, roads, and tunnels used by the vast majority of drivers and riders to commute and travel and as used by commerce (e.g., trucking and delivery) vehicles, which is the financial lifeblood of Maryland - **Tax dollars are better spent to help all residents, not the wealthy SCMaglev system owners and their "well heeled" riders.**
- The SCMaglev will take ridership from Amtrak and Acela, requiring increased subsidies to maintain the existing East Coast rail system - **Tax dollars will be used to subsidize two competing train systems.**
- BWRR states that large numbers of vehicles will be taken off the road – **Where is the analysis to support this claim?** The SCMaglev DEIS⁹ refutes this statement in multiple places¹⁰, and with the annual growth of traffic in Maryland, whatever savings BWRR states will be made would likely be overcome by the annual pre-COVID-19 vehicle usage growth. Again, SCMaglev ridership will likely come from Acela or air flights, not cars commuting to and from Washington, D.C.
- COVID-19 has created a significant wrinkle for BWRR's SCMaglev project and all mass transit ridership projections and revenues. Many agencies and support businesses have proven their knowledge workers can work remotely. The cost of office space in Washington,

⁹ DEIS – SCMagLev Draft Environmental Impact Statement

¹⁰ See "SCMagLev DEIS Comments, Concerns, and Questions" section XXIX "Unsubstantiated Claims" pages 91 to 116, and 141 to 149. May 20, 2021. https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_12074e36746044e08fccd7a57f081409.pdf.

D.C. is very high, and agencies and businesses are already looking at downsizing their office footprint and invest the rent savings back into mission-related work – **How does the massive growth in remote working impact BWRR’s claims? Where is/are the analysis(es)?**

- As stated before, it is unlikely that greenhouse gases and road congestion will be reduced by the SCMaglev. The operation of SCMaglev maintenance vehicles would add to the existing traffic congestion - **SCMaglev will unlikely reduce greenhouse gases and more likely create an increase in road congestion.**
- Our tax dollars should be used for the infrastructure we all rely on and need. The construction jobs generated will be long-term, as there are miles and miles of roads, bridges, and tunnels that need maintenance, repair, and enhancement. In addition, the continued improvement and expansion of MARC needs to continue. Note: MARC provides a low-cost transportation option to a far greater number of Marylanders than the SCMaglev will ever provide - **The long-term net effect is more long-term construction jobs will be available in Maryland rebuilding and enhancing Amtrak and MARC, as well as the whole of our transportation infrastructure.**
- Note, with the passage of the of the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, funding was made available to continue upgrading our rail infrastructure, including the replacement of the Baltimore-Potomac tunnel. This Act will create thousands of construction jobs and the work has begun. **Jobs have been and will be created as the result of the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Since 2010, few construction jobs have been realized with the building of the SCMaglev.**

(6) The Need for Other Far More High-Value Transportation Infrastructure Improvements Outweigh Wasting Funds on Building the SCMaglev.

Supporters of the SCMaglev state that the existing 150-year-old rail system is out of date and employs obsolete technology. I rode MARC and Amtrak into Washington, D.C. for nearly 30 years. Not once was I on a train that employed a wood-fired steam engine. Amtrak and MARC employ modern equipment, that is running on an upgraded high-speed rail system. Both are purchasing and implementing new, proven, state-of-the-art equipment.

Amtrak and the FRA completed an expensive multi-year EIS and review of Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor Future (NEC) plan (2017).¹¹ One of the key findings in this report was that a new alignment was too expensive and not needed when the planned upgrades and rebuilding of the existing system was considered. With the FRA’s approval of the *NEC Future* plan, Amtrak secured loans totaling \$2.7 billion, and is actively engaged in upgrading rail, equipment, and stations all along the Northeast Corridor.

Note: Maryland’s own BWI Rail Station has been replaced with a larger, modern, and improved comfort building with upgrade technology at a cost of \$4.7 million.

Amtrak has built the next generation of train equipment capable of speeds in the 200 miles-per-

¹¹ U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Railroad Administration. *NEC Future: A Rail Investment Plan for the Northeast Corridor*. Record of Decision. July 2017. <https://www.fra.dot.gov/necfuture/pdfs/rod/rod.pdf>.

hour range. Having past FRA evaluations, Amtrak is currently testing the new train technology on the Northeast corridor, with the plan to bring this new technology online for customers this to next year. The train is being designed and built in the United States, by American unions and trades, not imported from overseas as the SCMaglev and its supporting systems. More information on Amtrak's NEC Future and the status of the second-generation Acela are readily available on the Internet.

In a recent test, an existing MARC passenger train, running on existing track, and managed by existing control systems, travelled from Baltimore Penn Station (located in the heart of Baltimore City), stopped at the BWI Rail Station, and continued onto Washington, D.C.'s Union Station completing the run in 30 minutes. BWRR claims their SCMaglev can complete the run in 15-minutes, starting from the proposed Cherry Hill station (located on the far southern end of Baltimore City). The MARC ticket cost is \$10. The various stated SCMaglev ticket cost is \$25 to \$80 - a range between twice to eight times the cost to ride the MARC train, all to save a theoretical 15-minutes of travel. As noted in Carol Park's article, the demographics of Baltimore City residents cannot afford to ride the SCMaglev on a regular basis. The MARC service is far more accessible and affordable.

Instead of wasting money to build a transportation system that will not serve Marylanders and take funds needed for transportation infrastructure, I, MCRT, CATS, and a long and growing list of community, civic, environmental organizations, cities and counties, as well as federal agencies, believe it would be far better to invest those funds into Amtrak, MARC, and the current Maryland transportation infrastructure.

For example, look around the room you are in. Everything you see — the structure, paint, electrical systems, electronics, furniture, and clothes and shoes you are wearing — the raw materials to the finished products were transported by commercial truck. Maryland's commerce and economic well-being requires a sound transportation infrastructure to operate efficiently. Such systems draw business to Maryland and improve the economic and tax revenue base of our state. How many Maryland bridges are rated "C" or lower and need to be repaired or replaced? Such work would be a far better use of Maryland's and, for that matter, federal tax dollars, than investing in and subsidizing an unnecessary high-cost train for the elite, "well-heeled" rider.

AND . . .

In this written testimony, we have not addressed security concerns associated with having a 300-plus mile-an-hour train flying down a guideway 150-feet in the air, or through a tunnel. What catastrophic results would occur if someone is able to access the track and executes an attack? Who is going to maintain the security envelope, what is the cost of these resources, and what will the state, cities and counties will be required (forced) to provide? All of this would take additional tax dollars, again dollars better used elsewhere.

I agree with the *Lessons from Asia for the Northeast SCMaglev* report recommendation:

"The Northeast Maglev project should be scrapped before it is too late. There are many transportation priorities that are worthier of attention."

There are two additional concerns to which I draw your attention:

- (1) If built, the SCMaglev will potentially release toxins, carcinogens, and radon gas into our communities.
- (2) If built, the SCMaglev will expose our school structures, personnel, and students to constant low-level vibration and oscillating magnetic fields as the train is running under them.

Concerns Explained:

- (1) If built, the SCMaglev will potentially release toxins, carcinogens, and radon gas into our communities.

As described during the BWRR-Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) Open House (October 16, 2017) by the Louis Berger professional engineer, the ventilation facilities' primary purpose is to clear smoke in case there is a fire in the tunnel. Located every 3 to 4 miles apart along the underground tunneled route, the ventilation units will force air into the tunnel on the side of the section filled with smoke as the next ventilation facility exhausts air from the tunnel. In other words, one ventilation facility will pressurize the tunnel ahead of the section with smoke while the alternate ventilation facility will depressurize the tunnel to exhaust the smoke into the atmosphere.

Our concern is that the source of a fire will likely be electrical. Such a fire consumes electrical insulation and lubricants. As identified in a Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) study, when burned, these fuel sources produce both toxic and carcinogen compounds¹² that, according to the planned use of the ventilation system described, will exhaust these dangerous compounds into the atmosphere, exposing the surrounding communities to these unhealthy chemical compounds. Such toxins and carcinogen exposure released into the atmosphere can potentially create damaging respiratory effects, with the possibly of life-threatening scenarios for the residents and wildlife near the vents who would be suddenly inhaling these hazardous compounds.

Our question: What short-, mid-, and long-term health effects will this have on the affected community? If nothing else, it will have a negative effect on property values and their related property tax revenue. Who wants to raise their family next to a facility that may release poison into the atmosphere at any time?

As you may know, Anne Arundel and Prince George's Counties have naturally occurring radon gas. Radon gas is a known carcinogen, which is why homes and other buildings are tested across both counties. Infiltrating from the ground, this colorless and odorless gas finds its way

¹² As noted in an MIT study referenced in "SCMagLev DEIS Comments, Concerns, and Questions" section LI "The Building and Operation of the SCMagLev Will Have Significant and Potentially Health Harming Impacts on Human and Wildlife and Property" pages 122 to 131. May 20, 2021. https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_12074e36746044e08fccd7a57f081409.pdf.

into building basements through cracks and seams between the basement walls and concrete floor.

During the discussion with the professional engineer from Louis Berger hired to design the building of the SCMaglev, we asked about water infiltration, drainage, and pumped water removal, as the tunneling under Linthicum will likely intersect the aquifer. Also, there is the question about monitoring and venting naturally occurring gases that leak into the tunnel through the same openings through which ground water enters, as the tunnel will serve as a large collecting system for ground leaching gases as it transits Anne Arundel County and the southern section of Prince George's County 80 to 150 feet below the surface. When these ventilation facilities exhaust into the atmosphere, anyone near these facilities will also be exposed to any radon gas collected in the tunnel. As with all radioactive materials, the intensity and length of time of exposure determines the severity of the side effects. Therefore, any low-level exposure, whether to radiation over a short or a long period, will likely have negative effects on human and wildlife resulting in health issues. Further, like long-term exposure to low-level radiation, long-term exposure to low levels of electromagnetic radiation may also have cumulative health effects on the human and wildlife. The electromagnetic radiation generated by the SCMaglev needs to be evaluated and publicly reported well before any building authorization is approved.

Our question: What long-term cumulative health effects will radon gas and electromagnetic radiation exposure have on the affected community as radioactive radon gas is vented into the atmosphere through the ventilation facilities?

- (2) If built, the SCMaglev will expose our school structures, personnel, and students to constant low-level vibration and oscillating magnetic fields as the train running under them.

As the train passes underground near and or below our schools, homes, and businesses, what effect will the resulting vibration have on the structures? Masonry structures do not fare well with constant exposure to vibration. Given that most of our homes and businesses are built on concrete foundations and masonry walls, continuous exposure to even low-level vibrations will likely have a cumulative effect, which will include cracking followed by water penetration, negatively impacting the structural integrity of the building. Such cracks allow groundwater and rainwater runoff to enter basements. Besides damp and wet basements, mold growth becomes another potential human health issue.

Our questions: What are the long-term health impacts of exposure to low-level oscillating electromagnetic fields and vibrations as the SCMaglev transit passes under our homes, businesses, and schools and their playgrounds?

In Summary:

I, MCRT and CATS have provided a list of reasons why the SCMaglev should be stopped now before Maryland is forced into a position where it has no choice but to make use of our needed tax dollars to directly or indirectly fund the SCMaglev building, maintenance, operation, and

security. Our tax dollars are far better spent to replace, repair, and enhance MARC and our existing transportation infrastructure.

And my concluding question:

Are you willing to expose our families and children to find out what will be the long-term health effects?

Again, thank you for this opportunity to provide this written before you on reasons to oppose building and operating the SCMaglev.

Attachment 1: “Lessons from Asia for the Northeast SCMaglev”
(Copy attached – see pages 15-17).

Short Informational MCRT-CATS Position Papers and their links:

- (1) CATS-MCRT Rpt - SCMagLev Biological Impact – 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_efecc0b083614963a73f1b04cebe4cec.pdf
- (2) CATS-MCRT Rpt - SCMagLev Biological Impact (Part 2) - 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_54c8689b28194a99afcd5e4b404efebe.pdf
- (3) CATS-MCRT Rpt - Amtrak the Better Alternative – 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_62a178a0ce394b6b887b1c4e4f3c44f4.pdf
- (4) CATS-MCRT Rpt - The Next Generation of Acela – 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_60c28f6dad84512802de36f7a79e54d.pdf
- (5) CATS-MCRT Rpt - What Impact Would the Have on Our Communities?– 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_f767cb0eb0724bfb8341cd86df2ab1a4.pdf
- (6) CATS-MCRT Rpt - Is the SCMagLev Safe? – 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_47f2ce2871e24664b8f100db013793ad.pdf
- (7) CATS-MCRT Rpt - Is the SCMagLev Safe? (Part 2) – 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_6181d1a331f94219969c286bc0efec33.pdf
- (8) Kelly PhD, Owen. Ridership Revisted: The Official Ridership Forecast for the Proposed Baltimore-Washington Maglev Is a Factor of Ten Too High. 2021. <https://www.greenbeltonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/kelley202108.magrider.pdf>
- (9) O’Toole, Randal. Maglev to Destroy Habitat, Climate. April 6, 2021. <https://www.cato.org/blog/maglev-destroy-habitat-climate>.

Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit (MCRT) evaluates transit projects for social equity, environmental justice, economic viability, and community accessibility. We believe that the Baltimore Washington (BW) SCMaglev must be stopped in order to implement future transit projects that meet our criteria of a much lower price and much less risk and impact to communities. Thus, we support the no-build option and are working to stop this project through the National Environmental Policy Act process. For more information about MCRT see our website at: www.mcrt-action.org.

Citizens Against the SCMaglev (CATS) is a confederation of scientists, engineers, experts, community organizations and citizens in support of transportation infrastructure improvements that benefit our communities, state, and nation. CATS opposes the construction of an expensive transportation system serving a small minority of the wealthy at the cost of taxpayer funds far better used to maintain and improve the transportation infrastructure needed and used daily by all citizens, businesses, and commerce. For up-to-date information on the SCMaglev opposition, see our Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/groups/CitizensAgainstSCMaglev.

Attachment #1

Report from the Center for Business and Economic Competitiveness at the Maryland Public Policy Institute

Lessons from Asia for the Northeast SCMaglev

Originally published in the *Daily Record*.

December 7, 2018

In China, a bullet train crash in the city of Wenzhou in 2011 killed 40 people. The crash was blamed on poor design and mismanagement. In Taiwan, the bullet train system rang up \$1.5 billion in losses over seven years, requiring a \$1 billion government bailout to date. In South Korea, a high-speed rail line connecting Seoul to Incheon closed in 2018 after just four years of service because 77 percent of seats were unoccupied.

Across the Pacific Ocean, supporters of “SCMaglev” in the United States are gearing up to create an American version of the Asian rail disasters. The Northeast Maglev is a proposed magnetic levitation train that would travel at 311 miles per hour, carrying passengers between Baltimore City and Washington, D.C. in 15 minutes. The Maglev team hopes to start construction on the ostensibly private project in 2020.

SCMaglev enthusiasts have been pushing the project despite warnings of significant risks, just like the supporters of the bullet train did in Asia. For instance, the South Korean government built the Seoul-Incheon line despite consistent warnings of inadequate demand. The project was politically, rather than commercially, driven: Korean officials wanted to present a futuristic version of Korea to the international community as part of the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics.

SCMaglev supporters in Maryland have similar non-business motives for backing the project. Baltimore has been experiencing a steady population decline over the years, and many supporters believe that connecting the city to economically vibrant D.C. could reverse that trend. This vision has blinded the advocates to serious concerns about the project.

First, though the project purports to be a private effort, high-speed train projects are generally magnets of questionable government subsidies. “We can’t build our infrastructure 100 percent privately,” said Wayne Rogers, the CEO of Northeast Maglev. Building the SCMaglev line from Baltimore to D.C. is estimated to cost between \$12 billion to \$15 billion (Others believe the cost will be far more). So far only \$5 billion in private investment has been secured for the project, so taxpayers will be on the hook to finance the rest of the project, likely taking funds needed for other far more valuable national infrastructure projects.

Second, it’s highly doubtful the SCMaglev will attract sufficient ridership to make it economically viable. According to SCMaglev officials, the service would target the “elite business travelers” and charge higher prices than Amtrak, which already provides regular rail service between the two cities, and is in the process of upgrading their infrastructure, equipment and stations to support faster trains on existing right-of-ways. Just as with the Seoul-Incheon line, there are also numerous bus companies that provide affordable trips along the Baltimore-D.C. route.

Finally, building the Northeast Maglev will inevitably disrupt the communities along the line because of noise and electromagnetic fields, destruction of homes and businesses during the building of the elevated portions of the line, as well as destruction of remaining green space between Baltimore and D.C., and the negative environmental impacts of tunneling, not to mention the hurtling trains. As the planned SCMaglev will only make three stops, the affected residents are unlikely to experience any commercial or economic development in their neighborhood. In short, residents along the route will pay the high price and receive little to no benefit from the SCMaglev.

Supporters of SCMaglev dismiss these concerns. They argue that the success of bullet trains in Japan demonstrate that these hurdles can be overcome. That's exactly what officials in China, Taiwan and South Korea thought, only to discover that the situation in Japan is unique. Most of Japan's 128 million inhabitants live in a few densely populated cities. Many of those residents are rich enough to afford expensive train tickets.

Compared to Japan, the situation is the polar opposite in Baltimore, where many of the residents who depend on public transit are low-income workers. If these residents are to commute between Baltimore and D.C., they would need an option that is affordable and easily accessible from their homes. The SCMaglev is neither. MARC provides that reliable and cost-effective transportation system, that last year moved over 8 million passengers into and out of D.C.

The Northeast Maglev project should be scrapped before it is too late. There are many transportation priorities that are worthier of attention.

In early 2018, Baltimore's Metro subway line closed for a month. According to the American Public Transportation Association, the closure was due to the Maryland Transit Administration's lack of expertise and poor communication. Meanwhile, the D.C. Metro system is a never-ending series of service disruptions, crumbling infrastructure and safety failures.

If Maryland wants to improve its transportation system, it should focus on ensuring that its existing projects are safe and managed properly. Whether this is done by restructuring the MTA or by privatizing some of its operations to incentivize better performance, it will not take billions of dollars to ensure that Maryland residents have reliable public transportation.

According to SCMagLev's Chair, Wayne Rogers, "Infrastructure is fundamentally a government responsibility, which has failed." He is right. Many governments across the ocean have failed by partnering with private companies to build trains that turned out to be costly, dangerous, and increasingly reliant on government support. We can avoid recreating the same high-speed catastrophe in North America by abandoning the Northeast Maglev now.

The author of the original article is Carol Park, a senior policy analyst in the Center for Business and Economic Competitiveness at the Maryland Public Policy Institute. She can be reached at cpark@mdpolicy.org.

Source: Park, Carol. "Transportation Lessons from Asia for the Northeast Maglev." December 7, 2018. The Maryland Public Policy Institute. www.mdpolicy.org/research/detail/lessons-from-asia-for-the-northeast-maglev?fbclid=IwAR2C1sAfojicOFJ7J6jXCqvtGmKADrtVAopQpP7XRZnc38V25p8G5wWp2s4.

HB0179 letter 2_20_2024.pdf

Uploaded by: Deborah Barrett

Position: FAV

Date: 20 February 2024

Subject: Written Testimony in Favor of HB0170 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System (Cross-file SB0079)

To: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

From: Deborah Barrett, longtime resident of Laurel, MD.

I am writing in support of House Bill 170, sponsored by Senator Alonzo Washington.

House Bill 170 would prohibit Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) from appropriating funds from the state of Maryland to build the proposed SCMaglev transportation system, “providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries” of state employees. This exception is in response to Northeast Maglev’s concerns that earlier versions of this bill had unintended consequences in that it would inadvertently tie their hands to work with the appropriate state personnel to acquire permits or other required approvals should the project go forward. By including this provision, the bill should be acceptable to BWRR and the Northeast Maglev.

Testimony:

The state’s transportation funding is already facing limitations and funding needs to be allocated toward *urgent and practical projects* – those that will benefit Maryland citizens – *the taxpayers who pay for these projects*. The transportation needs of the state and its residents are for *effective, affordable, and accessible commuter options*. The smartest course of action is to continue upgrading our existing Amtrak and MARC systems.

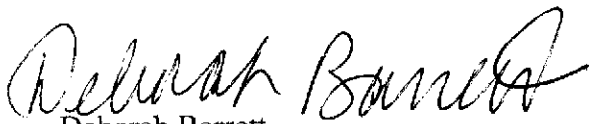
- BWRR and Northeast Maglev claim they want to be able to access state funding “if” they need financial funding later in their project. Projects of this size *always* have cost overruns, and BWRR and Northeast Maglev are *currently* facing loss of federal funding. *State* funds should serve the greater good of Maryland residents.
- If this project were to ever “begin,” it will run out of funding over and over and over again and be *continuously* over budget, becoming a black hole for greater and greater amounts of state funding. The end result? Our financial resources will be seriously compromised *for an unneeded project that will never be completed*. And our precious natural resources will be *forever* damaged – for ABSOLUTELY NO BENEFIT TO ANYONE.
- The NEPA process is currently paused on this project. To move this project to the next level significant work needs to be done, *but the federal funding to allow this is not in place*. In addition, BWRR has been *unable* to demonstrate to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) that the construction of this project will meet MDE’s requirements for *protecting our waterways*. This project will destroy *hundreds of acres of wild green spaces* including a forest preserve, wetlands and wildlife refuge all of which are needed for CO2 storage, clean air and water, and climate cooling.

- The Japanese government has offered to invest in the project, but this puts Maryland at risk of having the Japanese government demanding funds for this project. It is very important to have legislation to impede this.
- And last but not least, **this poses a huge SAFETY concern** for our residents and taxpayers. It is *commercially unproven* technology for which the U.S. *has no safety standards*, yet safety certification is planned for “after construction starts.” (DEIS Appendix G, Part 3, page 4, “Construction can proceed prior to the completion of the Rule of Particular Applicability (RPA), but operation cannot commence without it.”) *Not having safety regulations worked out prior to construction design* makes no sense, and it is *contrary* to the U.S. Department of Transportation policy in its 2020 report, “Pathways to the Future of Transportation,” noting **safety should be the first priority**.
Please do not let BWRR and the Japan financiers use Maryland as a guinea pig.
- **WHAT DO MARYLANDERS NEED?** Our need for far more high-value and equitable transportation infrastructure improvements, such as MARC and Amtrak, far outweighs expending excessive funds on building and operating the SCMaglev.
 - Maryland needs transportation options that dovetail with other options, use similar rail lines, and share ticketing systems.
 - As improvements are completed, Amtrak and MARC project much higher speeds on their lines: investing in Amtrak and MARC makes sense.

Much is on the line in this bill. Maryland’s financial resources, our natural resources of land and water, and the safety of our residents and our communities. Protecting the state from losing funding for much-needed transportation and infrastructure projects throughout the state is the best option.

I strongly recommend that HB0170 be given a **favorable** vote and moved out of committee. For the state economy, our communities, our taxpayers, the environment, and our future!

Sincerely Yours,



Deborah Barrett
10302 Bristolwood Ct.
Laurel, MD 20708
301-953-2253

Greenbelt HB0170 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Emmett Jordan

Position: FAV



GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL

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Danielle McKinney
Jenni Pompei
Silke I. Pope
Rodney M. Roberts

February 22, 2024

Maryland Senate and House Members:

On behalf of the City of Greenbelt, I offer this written testimony in support of HB0170/SB0079. The proposed SCMAGLEV project has raised significant concerns, particularly around the misallocation of Maryland's state resources which could otherwise improve existing transportation services. Transparency issues regarding the project's financial sustainability, erroneous environmental impact statements, and potential environmental degradation have been highlighted. Additionally, the project's energy inefficiency and unlikely congestion relief are at odds with Maryland's current \$3.3 billion DOT budget shortfall and essential public services. Overall, the project's purported benefits are overshadowed by its financial and ecological implications.

More specifically;

1) State Resources Would Better Support Our Existing Rail Service. Any state resources proposed to support the MAGLEV project would be better spent on sustaining and improving existing rail and local transit services. These services include High-speed Amtrak service, the MTA, MARC trains, and WMATA (metro) providing far greater benefits to Marylanders in terms of access and affordability. Much of the access and benefits not proposed to be supported by the MAGLEV project. Substantial public investments to sustain and improve these services will be required in the coming years. Funding for these services; funding for bicycle & pedestrian connections, and ways to move commuters to our transit hubs are the best place to put taxpayer resources.

2) Incomplete Information and Transparency on Public Information. The information presented to the public about the MAGLEV so far does not show operating and maintenance costs offsetting revenues. There are several significant unanswered questions remaining regarding the financial viability of the project. Further, while the project was touted as a private venture where no public funds were to be requested, it appears that public funding will be sought after. We feel that if the project is financially viable, then it should be supported by operating revenues and private investment, not needing public monies.

3) The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Flawed. The Federal Railroad Administration released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project in 2021. The City performed a thorough review of the project that uncovered a significant number of errors and omissions. An example of one such error is the project's ridership estimates and related

projections (including travel time savings, induced travel, and reliability benefits) are grossly over-inflated, leading to further inflation of estimated congestion relief and projected revenues.

4) Anticipated Damage to the Environment and Natural Ecosystem. The MAGLEV project would also destroy sensitive environmental resources and habitats. Including impacting rare, threatened and endangered species and eliminating vast swaths of tree canopy that are treasured by Marylanders. The project could impact nearly 89 acres of wetlands and up to 30 acres of Maryland Nontidal Wetlands of Special State Concern (NTWSSC). These wetlands have exceptional ecological or educational value of statewide significance. The impacts to the NTWSSC located in the Greenbelt Forest Preserve along Goddard Branch are of particular concern to Greenbelt.

5. Maryland Department of Transportation \$3.3B Deficit. This year the Maryland Department of Transportation is dealing with a \$3.3B budget shortfall. To solve this shortfall, the Department will cut roughly \$1 billion from its operating budget. Another \$2 billion will be cut from its capital budget. Local governments will see a \$400 million reduction - monies that are critical to local government providing safe roads and sidewalks for our residents and visitors. And while we recognize that the MAGLEV funding may be a few years off, the Transportation Secretary is quoted as saying “This is not a new problem for our state.” The state cannot afford to provide public funding for what has been touted as a private venture, to the detriment of state operations, road/infrastructure and critical local support.

6. The Project Will Not Relieve Congestion. Norman Marshall, President and founder of Smart Mobility, Inc., who assisted Greenbelt with its review, stated, “The supposed congestion relief for non-SCMAGLEV travelers will not materialize. Instead, construction of the SCMAGLEV will create a two-tier system with a fast ride for the affluent and negative consequences for everyone else.” The DEIS overestimates travel time savings and reliability benefits by a factor of five or more. Three-quarters of the purported economic benefits of SCMAGLEV are travel time and reliability benefits and these are overestimated by a factor of 15 or more. The other significant economic benefits calculations in the DEIS rest both on inflated ridership and on unreliable vehicle miles traveled (VMT) multipliers.

7. The Project Is Not “Green” and Energy Friendly. The project is not “green” nor energy efficient as suggested. It will increase energy consumption by the equivalent of approximately 88,900 homes per year during operations. It is unclear if the regional transmission organization will be able to meet this increased need or what the impacts on reliability and consumer prices may be. This energy demand concern is exacerbated by the fast growth in EV charging needs throughout the state putting additional demands on the electric grid. However, the use of EVs by our residents has a much greater impact on improving environmental quality and the quality of life of our resident and City.

8. BWRR Withdrawal of Application for Water Quality Certification. The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) issued a letter stating its intent to deny BWRR’s application for a water quality certification. MDE explains that it lacks sufficient information to determine whether the MAGLEV project will meet Maryland’s water quality standards and therefore intends to deny the certification. It mentions, among other things, uncertainty as to the final design of the project, missing information about anticipated discharges and their impacts,

and deficiencies in stormwater design and the Social and Economic Justification. BWRR then withdrew their application. In MDE's letter acknowledging BWRR's withdrawal, MDE strongly recommended that BWRR wait to reapply for a water quality certification until after federal review of the SCMaglev project under the National Environmental Policy Act resumes and there is more certainty about the final route.

In summary, State resources that could potentially be allocated to the MAGLEV project in the future would be better spent on improving existing rail and local transit services, providing support to Maryland roads and infrastructure and supporting local governments and the services that residents depend on. Maryland taxpayer resources should not be appropriated for a MAGLEV System that undermines the natural resources so many Marylanders are fighting trying to preserve.

On behalf of the City of Greenbelt, we urge you to support HB0170/SB0079.

Sincerely,

Mayor Emmett V. Jordan

Testimony 2-20-2024.pdf

Uploaded by: Joyce Campbell

Position: FAV

February 20, 2024

Written Testimony in Favor of HB0170 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System (Cross-file SB0079)

To: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

My name is Joyce Campbell, submitting testimony as an individual. I am speaking in support of HB0170, sponsored by Delegate Nicole Williams.

About this bill: This bill would prohibit Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) from appropriating funds from the state of Maryland to build the proposed SCMaglev transportation system, “providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries” of state employees. This exception directly addresses concerns expressed by Northeast Maglev that a previous version of this bill had unintended consequences in that it would inadvertently tie their hands to work with the appropriate state personnel to acquire permits or other required approvals should the project go forward.

I support this bill because I do not believe that any taxpayer money should go for a transportation system that would benefit the wealthy, would be out of reach of the middle and poorer classes, would be bad for the environment (destroying forests that surround Greenbelt where I live), and would go against principles of environmental justice since its construction would damage low-income neighborhoods.

BWRR claims that the Maglev would pay for itself with private investment but we know from past experience that despite good intentions, such massive transportation projects sooner or later demand taxpayer money to be viable. Hence the need for this bill.

This bill is even more important when one considers the financial needs of the State of Maryland now – the deficit and our already high taxes. This bill would ward off the possibility of having to include funding the Maglev in the state’s budget.

I ask that HB 170 be given a favorable vote and moved out of committee.

Sincerely,

Joyce R Campbell
7 Plateau Place, Unit D
Greenbelt MD 20770
540-449-5149

j.ribbens.campbell@gmail.com

Kathy Support for HB0170 2-20- 24.pdf

Uploaded by: Kathleen Bartolomeo

Position: FAV

Kathy Bartolomeo,
Greenbelt, Md.

Support for HB0170, February 20, 2024

As the state of Maryland is facing a projected funding deficit of \$3.3 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 change, we will need to push forward with projects that lessen its impact. Transportation for mass transit, pedestrian and biking safety, EV incentives, electrification of 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 SC Maglev is sustainable. BWRR has not shared clear information.

It amazes me why this project is still being promoted and most likely by people who would make lots of money from contracts and building.

Consider the possibility of the SC Maglev project coming to a halt before its completion (it would take about 10 years to build). With years of a lengthy schedule for building, rising costs, delays, permitting, and climate change impacts, what should happen if this project should come to a halt? Maryland would be left with devastated areas, and costly funds needed for mitigation.

(These funds are needed now for clear transportation choices.)

No other state has accepted such this project! It should bring a thoughtful pause.

Countries that have a Maglev – Japan’s test track, and China – Japan has faced much opposition and years of delays in completion.

Affordable? The cost to ride - averaging \$40-80 ticket for a one-way trip to one of three locations must also include the time and cost of driving, and the parking for SC Maglev. This makes it very expensive. So, most Marylanders will be excluded.

We need equitable, accessible transportation infrastructure. Let’s support MARC, Amtrak, the Red Line, and Metro.

(South Korea’s Maglev train opened in February 2016 and closed in September 2023 due to cost.)

(The Japanese Chūō Shinkansen Maglev train construction began in 2013 or 2014 and completion expected by 2037 to Nagoya-Osaka.)

(China has a test track, CCR 600.)

Thank you, Kathy Bartolomeo
Greenbelt, Md

HB0170 Prohibited Appropriations MagLev_Environ Tr

Uploaded by: Laurie McGilvray

Position: FAV



Committee: House Environment and Transportation Committee
Testimony on: HB-0170 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System
Organization: Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing
Submitting: Rhonda Kranz
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 22, 2024

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for accepting our written testimony in support of HB0170. Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing is a statewide coalition of over 30 grassroots and environmental advocacy organizations focused on climate justice. The bill will bring much-needed protection of public funds by prohibiting the State and certain units and instrumentalities of the State from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation transportation system in the State; and providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries.

Maryland has experienced significant cost overruns in large transportation projects. The Purple Line has encountered major financial problems with a cost overrun of \$1.4 billion. Excessive cost overruns in development of the Inter County Connector cost millions of federal taxpayers' dollars. It is essential that Maryland does not take responsibility for delays and contractual problems if the proposed SCMaglev project is approved. In fact, as the SCMaglev is a Private, rather than a Private-Public partnership, MD taxpayers should not be responsible for funding any part the proposed or future Maglev projects.

To date, no major public rail system in the world operates without government subsidy. Taxpayers have already covered the over five million federal and state dollars for the current SCMaglev environmental assessment processes (i.e., DEIS, environment certifications). At this juncture, the Federal Railroad Administration has run out of funding for the next step of developing an EIS and will need more federal dollars. Future projects would undeniably depend on a large amount of state and federal funds for certification and compliance.

We understand that Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail-(BWRR), is seeking additional funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and other grant sources to continue to tap into federal taxpayer funds. BWRR, a private company, repeatedly has stated in their arguments in opposition to this bill that, while they do not need state funds, they want them to be available just in case financial support is needed "later" in the project's implementation. Our concern is that *now* is their *later* because the current federal funds have been fully expended.

Maryland's transportation investments face persistent state funding difficulties and cost-cutting and carefully deliberated choices need to be made. Maryland should be focused on providing affordable and accessible transportation for all members of our communities. The SCMaglev would be built

with three stops, DC, BWI, and Baltimore, and no stops within the communities it would run through. Baltimore, Prince Georges, Anne Arundel, and Baltimore Counties would incur major financial and environmental costs of building the train, and most of the burden will be on already overburdened and environmental justice communities. SCMaglev's excessively expensive ridership cost would benefit only an exceedingly small fraction of the state's population.

Maryland is making great strides on adopting climate friendly policies, many targeted to be met by 2031. Analyses find that the SCMaglev would generate more greenhouse gases during construction than it is likely to save over several decades of operation. With a construction timeline of eight to ten years before ridership even begins, the SCMaglev would be significantly increasing, not decreasing Maryland's emissions, setting us back from achieving our emission reduction goals.

Why prohibit appropriations for all Maglev systems? There are multiple concerns regarding SCMaglev, including the loss of important ecological habitats, environmental justice and public health impacts, safety of the technology, and whether it would in fact lead to a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions. Most of these concerns, particularly environmental and health impacts are inherent in the Maglev technology rather than specific to the current proposal. Another important concern is that the technology is developed and maintained in Japan. Rather than benefiting Maryland, the investment in equipment and maintenance would benefit Japanese business resources and expertise.

Maglev trains are not compatible with the State's existing transportation systems. They require their own operating systems that would run underground and/or on elevated tracks that can be up to 150 feet in the air. And they take massive amounts of land to build and operate. The proposed SCMaglev project includes a rail maintenance yard larger than Disneyland that would be located on federal property.

Why would Maryland need a new rail system when we have existing transit with AMTRAC, MARC, and Bus Rapid Transit? The Federal Railroad Administration, through the Northeastern Corridor Future program has already developed a long-term vision and investment program with regional stakeholders. Billions of dollars have been committed and major upgrades to the existing Acela equipment that reach speeds comparable to Maglev trains. Marylanders deserve their taxpayer dollars to be used for commuter options that benefit all citizens; not gamble on still untested technology that would benefit only a small and wealthy minority.

Maryland residents should not have to bear the financial costs of any Maglev project which is not fully funded by the private developer, especially if the project runs into difficulties and escalating costs as we have seen in previous transportation projects as stated above. For the reasons given above, we urge a FAVORABLE vote for HB0170.

350MoCo

Adat Shalom Climate Action

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Environmental Justice Ministry

Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility

Climate Parents of Prince George's

Climate Reality Project

ClimateXChange – Rebuild Maryland Coalition

Coming Clean Network, Union of Concerned Scientists

DoTheMostGood Montgomery County
Echotopia
Elders Climate Action
Fix Maryland Rail
Glen Echo Heights Mobilization
Greenbelt Climate Action Network
HoCoClimateAction
IndivisibleHoCoMD
Maryland Legislative Coalition
Mobilize Frederick
Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
Montgomery Countryside Alliance
Mountain Maryland Movement
Nuclear Information & Resource Service
Progressive Maryland
Safe & Healthy Playing Fields
Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee
The Climate Mobilization MoCo Chapter
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland
WISE

HB170 Testimony draft.pdf

Uploaded by: Nicole Williams

Position: FAV

NICOLE A. WILLIAMS, ESQ.
Legislative District 22
Prince George's County

Judiciary Committee

Chair, Public Safety Subcommittee

Vice Chair, Democratic Caucus

Chair, Prince George's
County House Delegation



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Nicole.Williams@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 22, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman

Chair of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

6 Bladen Street, Room 251

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

House Bill 170

Good afternoon, Chair Korman, Vice-Chair Boyce, and the members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee. I am Delegate Nicole Williams, and I will be testifying in favor of House Bill 170, also known as **State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System**. This bill would prohibit the state of Maryland from using appropriation for the magnetic levitation transportation system.

We understand that there are several oppositions to this bill and also understand the critical arguments to those concerns regarding the alleged benefits of the MAGLEV system. I want to begin by stating that we are not in opposition to innovation and rapid rail, but rather the idea that the state would pay our citizens tax dollars to develop this expensive train. We see the importance of creating a new and improved transportation system that would alleviate congestion in our current transportation system and cause individuals to travel more efficiently.

Furthermore, the train being proposed, the Northeast MAGLEV train, is the first of this type of technology to be built in the United States, alleging travel between Washington, D.C., and New York City. However, the only stop between Washington, D.C., and Baltimore will be BWI, meaning communities between the two cities will receive little benefit and may suffer irreparable harm once the train runs. Also, the lack of approvals from any of the other States along this proposed route shows that this proposal is not ready for prime time. Maryland taxpayers should not have to pay to help sponsor the construction of this private enterprise and company.

Our worry about not passing this bill is that the private company responsible for financing and constructing the MAGLEV train has yet to secure even half of its projected cost.

NICOLE A. WILLIAMS, ESQ.
Legislative District 22
Prince George's County

Judiciary Committee

Chair, Public Safety Subcommittee

Vice Chair, Democratic Caucus

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County House Delegation



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

They previously iterated that there would be no need to rely on state funding; however, what if this changes with the new predicted cost? By passing this legislation, we can hold them to their current promise. State funds could and should then be secured for other priorities, such as improving our current transportation system, improving our neighborhood safety, and bettering education systems.

Maryland citizens should not be held responsible for the funding.

For these reasons, I urge this committee to give a favorable report on House Bill 170.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nicole Williams", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Delegate Nicole A. Williams, Esq.

Support HB0170 Town of Bladensburg.pdf

Uploaded by: Ray Jefferies

Position: FAV

Town of Bladensburg

Council Members

Ward I

Trina Brown

Kalisha Dixon



Mayor

Takisha James

Council Members

Ward I

Marilyn Blount

Carrol McBryde

February 20, 2024

The Honorable Delegate Marc Korman
Chair Delegate Nicole Williams
Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: Town of Bladensburg Support of HB 0170: State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations -
Magnetic Levitation Transportation System**

Dear Chairman Korman,

My name is Takisha James, and I serve as Mayor of Bladensburg, located in Prince George's County, Maryland. I want to thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of House Bill 0170, cross-filed in the Senate as SB 0079 State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System. I am writing today on behalf of the Town Council and our nearly 10,000 residents to request your support of HB 0170, which Delegate Williams sponsors.

The Town of Bladensburg lies directly along the proposed Superconducting Magnetic Levitation (SCMaglev) system route from Washington, DC, to Baltimore. While my community has several concerns around safety, human and environmental impacts, and long-term impacts on our historic buildings, which date back to the 1700s, as well as recently constructed buildings and homes, we understand this train may come to fruition.

With this in mind, I ask you to strongly consider protecting Maryland taxpayers from the unknown financial risks that can arise with such a project like this. The project developer, Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail, has communicated publicly and repeatedly that this project will be privately funded and not rely on government funding.

The truth is this project has already benefitted from taxpayer dollars, with the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) award of \$27.8 million by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). To build public trust in the developer, it would be most helpful for them to also testify in support of SB 0079. This would demonstrate their integrity and show taxpayers that we can trust them and give credence to their claim that we will never be expected to foot the bill for this project at any time. On behalf of our community, I ask you to help ensure the project developer keeps their word by moving this bill forward during the current legislative session.

The strength of the American economy is in allowing the consumer market to dictate which businesses succeed or fail. Looking through the lens of history, there have been times when we have witnessed the unthinkable. In 2008, for example, the federal government had to bail out the auto industry and Wall Street banks with billions of taxpayer dollars. The reality is that unimaginable situations can happen, and the unexpected does occur.

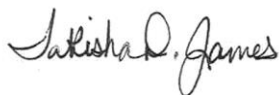
The automobile and banking industries have had deep roots in the American economy for over 100 years, and many of those years have been hugely profitable. To see these well-established industries proven vulnerable when crisis strikes should serve as a lesson to us. In learning from these examples, I have to question how a newly-introduced technology that has not yet experienced success in the U.S. market can stand on its own and guarantee profits in the future.

This bill does not delve into whether one is for or against the SCMaglev. For Maryland, it simply ensures our tax dollars will not be spent for any phase of this project. I believe elected officials must protect our residents from future financial hardship with a project like the SCMaglev. HB 0170 will go a long way toward protecting residents of the Town of Bladensburg, Prince George's County, and the entire state of Maryland by ensuring taxpayers are not left with a financial deficit should the developer decide to walk away from it or be unable to continue funding it in the future.

I want to thank each committee member for the opportunity to express my support for this legislation. I also want to applaud Delegate Williams for his leadership in seeking to codify and for bringing this issue back to the committee for action and the protection of Maryland residents. Again, I ask the committee to please support SB 0170.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Takisha D. James".

Takisha D. James
Mayor, Town of Bladensburg

HB0170 Prohibited Appropriations MagLev Oral Testi

Uploaded by: Rhonda Kranz

Position: FAV

Committee: House Environment and Transportation Committee
Testimony on: HB-0170 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System
Speaker: Rhonda Kranz
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 22, 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to submit oral testimony in Support of House Bill 170. My name is Rhonda Kranz. I live in Montgomery County and have been following the evolution of the proposed SCMaglev for several years. I will mention two issues today.

Maglev trains are not compatible with the State's existing transportation. They require their own operating systems and take massive amounts of land to build and operate. The permanent footprint of physical infrastructure for the proposed MCMaglev would be approximately 1400 acres. Over one-third is "laydown", areas where construction waste is hauled and tools and other materials are stored. These areas would be situated close and far and up and down the entire structure. For perspective, the Disneyland sized maintenance yard would be 11% of the total acreage. Any future Maglev transportation system would need a comparable amount of land to build and maintain.

These numbers are for physical infrastructure only and do not include the impact area beyond. It does not include direct impacts on communities and environmentally sensitive areas, or distances of pollutants that are carried downstream to the Chesapeake Bay.

Why would Maryland need to build a new rail system when we have existing interstate and local transit? The Federal Railroad Administration, has developed a long-term vision and investment program with regional stakeholders. Billions of dollars have been committed and major upgrades to the existing Acela equipment that reach speeds comparable to Maglev trains.

Marylanders should not bear the cost, suffer further damage to our precious and limited natural resources, or impair our most vulnerable communities with Maglev technology, either now or in the future.

These are two of a long list of health, safety, financial, environmental justice, and ecological reasons I urge a FAVORABLE vote for HB0170.

Written Testimony in Favor of HB0170 .pdf

Uploaded by: Susan Barnett

Position: FAV

February 22, 2024

Oral and Written Testimony in Favor of HB0170 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System (Cross-file SB0079)

To: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

My name is Susan Barnett. I am submitting testimony as an individual. I am in support of HB0170, sponsored by Delegate Nicole Williams.

About this bill: This bill would prohibit Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) from appropriating funds from the state of Maryland to build the proposed SCMaglev transportation system, “providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries” of state employees. This exception directly addresses concerns expressed by Northeast Maglev that a previous version of this bill had unintended consequences in that it would inadvertently tie their hands to work with the appropriate state personnel to acquire permits or other required approvals should the project go forward.

There are so many reasons this bill should receive a favorable report. Here are just a few:

1. Building and upkeep would be dependent on Japanese resources and expertise. Compare this to the upgraded train cars for Amtrak – being made here in the USA. The SCMaglev will require resources to be produced in Japan and shipped to the USA – a serious expense that Maryland should not be tied to.
2. JOBS: The Northeast Maglev (TNEM) and Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) have yet to disclose how the highly varying job numbers they project were calculated; how many are fulltime or long term, how many will be for local residents vs out of state or out of country jobs. And why these increasing numbers are not correlated to an increase in the cost of building and maintaining the train, the cost of which remains unchanged according to TNEM and BWRR. It leaves one to wonder about their ability to successfully manage the math and other technical aspects of this project!?
3. CLIMATE CHANGE CONCERNS: It has been determined through thorough research that this project will increase GHG. Also, the Baltimore-Washington **SCMAGLEV will require twice the energy per passenger mile as Amtrak**, increasing energy usage by approximately 3.0 trillion additional BTUs per year — enough energy to power around 88,900 homes per year. Research shows, generating the electricity needed to operate the SCMaglev would increase CO2 emissions. As noted in the EIA’s Maryland [Energy] Profile Analysis, Maryland consumes about five times more energy than it produces. Maryland purchases about 80 percent of its energy from surrounding states, as well as fuel from foreign countries. As the cost of electricity is increasing BWRR will want to ask the state for help in paying for this cost.

These are just a few points why this project is on very shaky ground financially and should give this committee reason to protect the state’s financial resources and block the option for these companies to request money.

I ask that HB 170 be given a favorable vote and moved out of committee.

Sincerely,

Susan Barnett
12 H Plateau Place, Unit H
Greenbelt, MD 20770
Tel: 301 474 7465

FAVORABLE McCutchen - HB0170 - 2024 State Finance

Uploaded by: Susan McCutchen

Position: FAV

February 22, 2024

Oral and Written Testimony in Favor of HB0170 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System (Cross-file SB0079)

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

My name is Susan McCutchen, a member of the Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit, submitting testimony as an individual. I am speaking in support of HB0170, sponsored by Delegate Nicole Williams. This bill would prohibit Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) from appropriating funds from the state of Maryland to build the proposed SCMaglev transportation system, “providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries” of state employees. This exception is responsive to and directly addresses concerns expressed by Northeast Maglev that a previous iteration of this bill had unintended consequences in that it would inadvertently tie their hands to work with the appropriate state personnel to acquire permits or other required approvals should the project go forward.

We understand that BWRR is actively seeking additional funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funds and perhaps other grant sources to continue to tap into federal taxpayer funds. A private company, BWRR repeatedly has stated in their arguments in opposition to this bill that, while they do not need state funds, they want them to be available just in case financial support is needed “later” in the project’s implementation. My concern is that *now* is their “later” because their federal funds have been fully expended. Furthermore, they proffer the hackneyed argument that such legislation would send the wrong message to developers of innovative forms of transportation and discourage them from doing business with Maryland. *The reality is that this bill would address only one specific overblown proposed project* that has proven unable to support broad and questionable promises of an influx of good-paying jobs, advanced technology education programs, and the uplifting of environmental justice communities to bring them and the state untold prosperity.

Maryland’s viable transportation projects that serve our communities currently face persistent state funding difficulties. Urgent and practical cost-cutting choices will need to be made. The SCMaglev project, shamelessly promoted as an *eventual* fast travel option from DC to New York as a convincing selling point, is not the kind of commuter train needed for the Northeast Corridor. Extremely costly, the projected costs will increase exponentially when the actual work is undertaken.

As a result, the ability of BWRR to either continue or complete the project will be curtailed. BWRR and its partners will seek additional funds from bank loans as well as from Maryland, in addition to the federal government. Government funds are taxpayer dollars. We the people will pay—and already have from the chunk of federal government funds allocated and expended to undertake the study and meet NEPA requirements.

The Japanese government intends to invest in the SCMaglev project, thereby becoming a BWRR partner. They will own an as-yet undetermined percentage of this project. Their technology and expertise will anchor the construction and operation of the SCMaglev. They will seek a profit above all no matter how many fees Japan waives for BWRR to acquire the technology. I do not relish the Japanese owning a piece of Maryland’s Northeast Corridor and demanding repayment should the project falter or perhaps not be able to be finished. They and all interested parties will no doubt expect to be repaid for their investments in building and operating the train. Again, we the people will pay to complete a foundering project or suffer living with a useless, uncompleted behemoth dissecting our communities.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony favorable to HB0170, which we look forward to moving out of committee.

Sincerely,

Susan R. McCutchen

5404 Spring Road, Bladensburg, Maryland
Tel: 301-699-9035

Greenbelt HB0170 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Timothy George

Position: FAV

February 22, 2024

Maryland Senate and House Members:

On behalf of the City of Greenbelt, I offer this written testimony in support of HB0170/SB0079.

The proposed SCMAGLEV project has raised significant concerns, particularly around the misallocation of Maryland's state resources which could otherwise improve existing transportation services. Transparency issues regarding the project's financial sustainability, erroneous environmental impact statements, and potential environmental degradation have been highlighted. Additionally, the project's energy inefficiency and unlikely congestion relief are at odds with Maryland's current \$3.3 billion DOT budget shortfall and essential public services. Overall, the project's purported benefits are overshadowed by its financial and ecological implications.

More specifically;

1) State Resources Would Better Support Our Existing Rail Service. Any state resources proposed to support the MAGLEV project would be better spent on sustaining and improving existing rail and local transit services. These services include High-speed Amtrak service, the MTA, MARC trains, and WMATA (metro) providing far greater benefits to Marylanders in terms of access and affordability. Much of the access and benefits not proposed to be supported by the MAGLEV project. Substantial public investments to sustain and improve these services will be required in the coming years. Funding for these services; funding for bicycle & pedestrian connections, and ways to move commuters to our transit hubs are the best place to put taxpayer resources.

2) Incomplete Information and Transparency on Public Information. The information presented to the public about the MAGLEV so far does not show operating and maintenance costs offsetting revenues. There are several significant unanswered questions remaining regarding the financial viability of the project. Further, while the project was touted as a private venture where no public funds were to be requested, it appears that public funding will be sought after. We feel that if the project is financially viable, then it should be supported by operating revenues and private investment, not needing public monies.

3) The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Flawed. The Federal Railroad Administration released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project in 2021. The City performed a thorough review of the project that uncovered a significant number of errors and omissions. An example of one such error is the project's ridership estimates and related projections (including travel time savings, induced travel, and reliability benefits) are grossly over-inflated, leading to further inflation of estimated congestion relief and projected revenues.

4) Anticipated Damage to the Environment and Natural Ecosystem. The MAGLEV project would also destroy sensitive environmental resources and habitats. Including impacting rare, threatened and endangered species and eliminating vast swaths of tree canopy that are treasured

by Marylanders. The project could impact nearly 89 acres of wetlands and up to 30 acres of Maryland Nontidal Wetlands of Special State Concern (NTWSSC). These wetlands have exceptional ecological or educational value of statewide significance. The impacts to the NTWSSC located in the Greenbelt Forest Preserve along Goddard Branch are of particular concern to Greenbelt.

5. Maryland Department of Transportation \$3.3B Deficit. This year the Maryland Department of Transportation is dealing with a \$3.3B budget shortfall. To solve this shortfall, the Department will cut roughly \$1 billion from its operating budget. Another \$2 billion will be cut from its capital budget. Local governments will see a \$400 million reduction - monies that are critical to local government providing safe roads and sidewalks for our residents and visitors. And while we recognize that the MAGLEV funding may be a few years off, the Transportation Secretary is quoted as saying “This is not a new problem for our state.” The state cannot afford to provide public funding for what has been touted as a private venture, to the detriment of state operations, road/infrastructure and critical local support.

6. The Project Will Not Relieve Congestion. Norman Marshall, President and founder of Smart Mobility, Inc., who assisted Greenbelt with its review, stated, “The supposed congestion relief for non-SCMAGLEV travelers will not materialize. Instead, construction of the SCMAGLEV will create a two-tier system with a fast ride for the affluent and negative consequences for everyone else.” The DEIS overestimates travel time savings and reliability benefits by a factor of five or more. Three-quarters of the purported economic benefits of SCMAGLEV are travel time and reliability benefits and these are overestimated by a factor of 15 or more. The other significant economic benefits calculations in the DEIS rest both on inflated ridership and on unreliable vehicle miles traveled (VMT) multipliers.

7. The Project Is Not “Green” and Energy Friendly. The project is not “green” nor energy efficient as suggested. It will increase energy consumption by the equivalent of approximately 88,900 homes per year during operations. It is unclear if the regional transmission organization will be able to meet this increased need or what the impacts on reliability and consumer prices may be. This energy demand concern is exacerbated by the fast growth in EV charging needs throughout the state putting additional demands on the electric grid. However, the use of EVs by our residents has a much greater impact on improving environmental quality and the quality of life of our resident and City.

8. BWRR Withdrawal of Application for Water Quality Certification. The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) issued a letter stating its intent to deny BWRR’s application for a water quality certification. MDE explains that it lacks sufficient information to determine whether the MAGLEV project will meet Maryland’s water quality standards and therefore intends to deny the certification. It mentions, among other things, uncertainty as to the final design of the project, missing information about anticipated discharges and their impacts, and deficiencies in stormwater design and the Social and Economic Justification. BWRR then withdrew their application. In MDE’s letter acknowledging BWRR’s withdrawal, MDE strongly recommended that BWRR wait to reapply for a water quality certification until after

federal review of the SCMaglev project under the National Environmental Policy Act resumes and there is more certainty about the final route.

In summary, State resources that could potentially be allocated to the MAGLEV project in the future would be better spent on improving existing rail and local transit services, providing support to Maryland roads and infrastructure and supporting local governments and the services that residents depend on. Maryland taxpayer resources should not be appropriated for a MAGLEV System that undermines the natural resources so many Marylanders are fighting trying to preserve.

On behalf of the City of Greenbelt, we urge you to support HB0170/SB0079.

Sincerely,

Mayor Emmett V. Jordan

Written Testimony in Support of HB0170 (2-22-24).p

Uploaded by: Tom Taylor

Position: FAV

Written Testimony in Support of HB0170 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System (Cross-file SB0079)

February 22, 2024

To: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

My name is Tom Taylor. I am submitting testimony as an individual, and I am writing in support of HB0170, sponsored by Delegate Nicole Williams.

About this bill: This bill would prohibit Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) from appropriating funds from the state of Maryland to build the proposed SCMaglev transportation system, “providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries” of state employees. This exception directly addresses concerns expressed by Northeast Maglev that a previous version of this bill had unintended consequences in that it would inadvertently tie their hands to work with the appropriate state personnel to acquire permits or other required approvals should the project go forward.

I support this legislation because I am very concerned about the impact that the proposed SC Maglev will have on state finances, the possibility of needing taxpayer funding to support the project, and the significant and detrimental impact the project will have on Maryland’s dwindling amount of green space.

I am particularly concerned about the following:

- I question whether the SCMaglev will generate sufficient revenue for operation and maintenance without public funding. The project sponsors – The Northeast Maglev (TNEM) and Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) – have made conflicting statements about project financing. At one point, they stated that all the funds needed will be generated by ridership, and at another time, that any such system necessitates private and public support. Independent research raises questions about the stated ridership projections. Experience with other such systems elsewhere in the world shows that many have failed or are being maintained with large government subsidies.
- The project is designed to provide high-speed transportation between Washington and Baltimore, with only the one stop at BWI airport in between. Ticket prices are projected to be high, and the service likely will benefit mostly higher-income residents. The project will do little to better the transportation options for ordinary residents and businesses in the state. MARC trains, by comparison, provide a low-cost transportation option to far more Maryland residents. MARC is much more affordable and more accessible. Taxpayer funding would be much better used to improve and expand MARC and other already-existing transportation infrastructure.
- The projected route of SCMaglev would have a strong and damaging environmental impact on a large swath of existing green space located at the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC), the Patuxent Research Reserve (PRR), and the Greenbelt Forest Preserve. These tracts of land encompass a significant portion of Maryland’s remaining green space, known as “the lungs of the Chesapeake,” and include streams, forest canopy,

wetlands, wildlife habitat, and other natural systems. These systems are essential for providing climate cooling, CO² storage, and ecosystems that help maintain clean water and healthy air. These resources are priceless, and cannot be measured by revenue streams. Industrial-level pollution resulting from the project will further threaten these natural resources.

With these concerns in mind, I ask for your support of HB0170. Maryland should make sure that needed state transportation funding is used to support affordable, accessible transportation infrastructure that benefits all Maryland residents and does no harm to the state's invaluable natural lands.

As the *Lessons from Asia for the Northeast SCMaglev* report recommended: "The Northeast Maglev project should be scrapped before it is too late. There are many transportation priorities that are worthier of attention."

Please give a favorable report on HB0170. Thank you for considering my views.

Tom Taylor
11-G Laurel Hill Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770
301-513-9524

HB170 Letter of Support (MAGLEV).pdf

Uploaded by: Tony Perez

Position: FAV



Prince George's County Municipal Association
An Association of 27 Municipalities



January 29, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chairman
Environment & Transportation Committee
Room 251, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for HB 170

Dear Chairman Korman,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of House Bill 170 sponsored by Delegate Nicole Williams and cross filed in the Senate as Senate Bill 0079 State Finance-Prohibited Appropriations-Magnetic Levitation Transportation System.

We write on behalf of the 27 municipalities that make up the Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA), which collectively represents more than 955,000 residents, to share our support of this bill. Our municipalities continue to share concerns with the proposed Superconducting Magnetic Levitation System (SCMaglev) around the use of state funding for this effort. It is critical to our collective responsibility as elected officials to implement safeguards to protect Maryland taxpayers from unknown and unnecessary financial risks associated with this project. This is exactly what we are seeking by supporting HB106. If the SCMaglev does manage to proceed forward, we are asking for your support with ensuring that Maryland residents and taxpayers are never responsible for any costs associated with the development, operations, and maintenance of the SCMaglev. The project developer, Northeast Maglev, has communicated publicly in a variety of forums that this project will be privately funded and not rely on government funding. Additionally, there needs to be additional evaluation on the equity of

this and future projects as it relates to service, including stops in Prince George's County, and the impacts including environmental concerns.

PGCMA is asking you to help ensure the project developer keeps their word by moving this bill forward during the current legislative session. We also want to applaud Delegate Williams for seeking to codify this financial protection for Marylanders to ensure we are not left with the bills for this project at any time in the future.

Sincerely,

Melinda Mendoza

Melinda Mendoza

PGCMA President

MMendoza@ColmarManor.org

HB_170_Scott_UNF

Uploaded by: Bill Scott

Position: UNF



Annapolis Office
191 Main Street
Annapolis, MD 21401
(410) 267-9200

Baltimore Office
6 South Gay Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
(443) 759-8360

Washington, D.C. Office
1212 New York Ave. NW Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 499-7933

February 21, 2024

HB0170

The Honorable Mark Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Regina T. Boyce
Vice Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB0170 —STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED APPROPRIATIONS – MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Dear Chair Korman, Chair T. Boyce, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committees:

My name is Bill Scott, and I am the President and COO of Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR). I appear before you today to convey our **strong opposition to HB0170**.

BWRR is a railroad franchised by the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) to operate a 311mph Superconducting Magnetic Levitation (SCMAGLEV) train between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore. Once constructed, the train will take passengers between Baltimore and Washington in about 15 minutes, accounting for a stop at BWI Airport. Not only will the project result in “substantial economic and social benefits to Baltimore and the State of Maryland,” as deemed by the Maryland PSC, but most notably, the project is not requesting any State appropriations.

HB0170 aims to prohibit any appropriations from being used by the State or certain units or instrumentalities of the State for a Magnetic Levitation system in Maryland. Passing a bill prohibiting appropriations that have not been requested is not only bad public policy, but also sends two clear messages to Maryland citizens:

1. That the region’s current rail transit system continues to be deeply misunderstood and dismissed.
2. That in a time of severe budget shortfalls, the Maryland State Legislature would rather spend time debating a bill that addresses a non-existent issue than tackle the very real, immediate concerns facing the State this year.

One of the main arguments behind this bill is that the Maryland taxpayer should never be “on the hook” for a project such as ours, further implying that State funds are better used elsewhere to improve and upgrade existing rail. We agree that the State should focus on improving state-run transportation projects, which is why we have never asked the legislature for financial



investment. This is especially crucial this year as Maryland faces a \$761 million budget shortfall and MDOT grapples with a \$3 billion+ shortfall over the next six years.

Additionally, Maryland's current rail infrastructure has already nearly met its physical limits, and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) conducted by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) confirms that the BWRR SCMAGLEV would, in fact, alleviate pressure on current rail infrastructure and Maryland taxpayers. It states, "To the degree that trains in the corridor are expected to be at capacity between 2030 and 2045, these diversions [to SCMAGLEV] free up capacity for additional travelers without making public investment to add capacity."

In other words, by alleviating stress on MARC and Amtrak, taxpayers will see savings through added transit capacity and reduced traffic -- without state appropriations. These savings can be reinvested in improving first- and last-mile transportation systems throughout the state, providing lawmakers the opportunity to invest in the well-rounded transit future so many Marylanders wish to see.

While the SCMAGLEV is not requesting State funding, passing a bill that prevents Maryland from pursuing remedies to resolve issues that plague its citizens is simply an effort that we cannot support.

HB0170 would signal to Maryland citizens and to the world that the state is closed to innovative, future-oriented, and true solutions to worsening issues.

For these reasons, Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail **strongly opposes HB0170** and urges the committee to submit an **unfavorable report**. Thank you for the opportunity to appear.

Sincerely,

Bill Scott
President / COO

HB_170_UNF_LateTestimony_DeanScott

Uploaded by: Dean Scott

Position: UNF

HB0170

February 20, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chairman, Environment and
Transportation Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Chairman, Appropriations Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Position: Oppose - HB0170 State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations –
Magnetic Levitation Transportation System**

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the House Environment and Transportation and
Chair Barnes and Members of the House Appropriations Committee

My name is Dr. Dean Scott, Founder of the Baltimore County Leaders and Citizens and
I am writing to oppose HB0170, a Bill that does nothing for the advancement of
progressive projects in the region. We are supporters of the Baltimore-Washington
Rapid Rail high-speed rail project that will connect Baltimore to Washington D.C. in 15
minutes and further connect the DMV to New York in less than one hour..

Dealing with the challenges of today requires problem- solvers who bring different
perspectives and are willing to take risks. Baltimore County Leaders and Citizens
emerged out of a pursuit to improve and support projects that are good for the
community and out of a desire for actions versus no action.

Established in 2000 we are an organization driven by progressive ideas and bold
actions. This proposed Bill HB0170 seems to do nothing but block any attempt to
improve transportation in the region. I urge you to oppose HB0170 .

Thank you,

Dr. Dean Scott, Founder
Baltimore County Leaders and Citizens
P.O. Box 1046
Randallstown, MD 21133

HB_170_UNF_LateTestimony_DexterBordes

Uploaded by: Dexter Bordes

Position: UNF



February 20, 2024

HB0170

The Honorable Guy Mark Korman
Chair, House Environment Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Regina T. Boyce
Vice Chair, House Environment
and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
S6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **HB0170** State Finance and Procurement - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

POSITION: **OPPOSE**

Dear Chair Korman, Chair T. Boyce, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committees,

The Waldorf Business Association promotes the establishment, growth, prosperity and retention of businesses within Charles County, Maryland and works with entities that share our values. In furtherance of our mission, I am proud to submit this letter to endorse the MAGLEV train project and encourage you and your committee to oppose Bill 00079. MAGLEV has committed to ensuring access to billions of dollars in contract opportunities for women- and minority-owned businesses through its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan.

The MAGLEV presents the safest train technology in the world. After decades of use, Japan's trains have resulted in zero onboard passenger fatalities. Bringing this innovative mode of transportation to the region will not only present thousands of promising jobs, provide for a diverse workforce, but is an overall an investment in prioritizing the health and safety of employees and, ultimately, passengers.

Our members are attracted to the economic security, safety, and prosperity that the MAGLEV project presents, and we urge your full support in advancing this project to enhance the well-being of the state's workforce and of the general public.

MAGLEV is not asking, and has pledged not to ask, for state funds in developing the project. This means HB0170 is a bad solution to a non-existent problem.

At this time, I ask that the committee submits an unfavorable report on this bill.

Sincerely,

Dexter Bordes,
President, Waldorf Business Association

HB 170_MDCC_State Finance – Prohibited Appropriati

Uploaded by: Hannah Allen

Position: UNF



LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

UNFAVORABLE

House Bill 170

Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

House Environment & Transportation Committee

Thursday, February 22, 2024

Dear Chairman Korman and Members of the Committee:

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber) is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 6,800 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth and recovery for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

House Bill 170 would create significant barriers for public and private investment in the construction of a magnetic levitation (Maglev) transportation system connecting Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. The legislation would essentially render any maglev project impossible to construct.

The Chamber believes that improved state transportation networks boost economic opportunity, and we work to advance short- and long-term solutions to statewide transit needs. Mass transportation projects, such as Maglev, create jobs, generate economic activity and transform Maryland into a leader in 21st-century transportation solutions.

Further, increased transit options would dramatically reduce commute times, thereby increasing productivity and unleashing new opportunities for businesses statewide. Enhanced options for Maryland commuters would also lessen the state's carbon footprint by reducing the number of cars on the road.

Finally, HB 170 represents the “slippery slope” of the use of public funds for the state's mass transportation projects. The Chamber is concerned with the potential precedent setting nature of banning the use of public funds for one project versus another.

For these reasons, the Chamber respectfully requests an **unfavorable report** on HB 170.

HB_170_UNF_LateTestimony_JoeGaskins

Uploaded by: Joseph Gaskins

Position: UNF

February 22, 2024

HB0170

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chairman
Environment and Transportation
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Ben Barnes, Chairman
Appropriations Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB0170 State Finance and Procurement - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

POSITION: **OPPOSE**

Dear Chair Korman, Chair Barnes, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee and Appropriations Committees.

I am Joe Gaskins, Chairman of the Prince George's Contractors and Business Association representing over 3,000 small, women and minority businesses located in the Maryland who collectively would be damaged by the passage of HB0170.

The Prince George's Contractors and Business Association has provide strong leadership and advocacy for issues that enhance the opportunity for small, women and minority businesses to exist and grow. PGCBA was established in 1989, and has 35 years of experience in fostering small and medium-sized, women and minority businesses. Our Mission is to assure that the businesses that we represent have a fair, equitable opportunity to create wealth and employ citizens within our communities. This includes access to vehicles that provide capital and resources. This Bill eliminates a possible resource in their development and could impede their access to a lucrative opportunity.

We wish to share with you our support for the Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail high-speed rail project that will connect Baltimore to Washington D.C. in 15 minutes and will provide \$4 billion in economic opportunities to their businesses.

Personally, as a community activist and entrepreneur, I see first-hand the multitude of benefits this transformative transportation system would have on the region. I'm excited about the possibilities for investment and employment for businesses throughout our region, bolstering the economic futures of thousands of residents through employment.

I have been fortunate to have in-depth conversations with Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail about their plans to develop the MAGLEV system equitably. Making sure that women and people of color have equitable access to the multitude of opportunities associated with this project is crucial to aligning with our state's ambition of building a brighter future for all Marylanders.

BWRR is not asking, and has pledged not to ask, for state funds in developing the project. This means HB0170 is a bad solution to a non-existent problem. Additionally, it sends a frightening message to future generations that we have no qualms making short-sighted decisions before they even have a chance to weigh in, an affront to their autonomy. They must have every tool at their disposal to fight the climate crisis and build the transportation system they want. I ask that the committee not take a viable option off the table.

At this time, I ask that the committee submits an unfavorable report on this bill.

Sincerely,

Joseph Gaskins
President & Chairman of the Board
Prince George's County Contractor's & Business Association
6710 Oxon Hill Road, Suite 210
Oxon Hill, Maryland 20745
(240) 286-8567

HB_170_UNF_LateTestimony_MarkAnthonyThomas

Uploaded by: Mark Anthony Thomas

Position: UNF

February 20, 2024

The Honorable Mark Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Regina T. Boyce
Vice Chair, House Environment and, Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: OPPOSITION TO HB0170 —STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED APPROPRIATIONS –
MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Dear Chair Korman, Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committees:

The GBC's merger with the Economic Alliance of Greater Baltimore positions our organization to unify business, civic, tech, academic, faith, and nonprofit stakeholders to support bold economic opportunities for the region.

Our initiatives—which include elevating the Baltimore Region as one of the premiere innovation hubs in the world—will ensure our communities and economy are at the cutting-edge of transformative technologies that will power the next generation of companies and science.

Transportation innovation is alive and well in America.

States and regions that compete with Maryland for talent and entrepreneurs are hubs for research, development, and piloting of autonomous, electric, and green vehicles, and advanced shuttles and transport systems.

These innovative cultures are hubs of new technologies to advance freight, air, port, and train travel. It is a remarkable transformation from a history of innovation that roots back to the first commercial train travel in America, in Maryland.

Accelerator programs for mobility innovation, state-level incentives to advance the creation of new job centers, and high-speed transportation research and development have touched rural states—including our neighbor West Virginia—and served to spark ecosystems of entrepreneurs thinking light-years ahead in the fastest growing technology hubs in the country.

We encourage you to submit an unfavorable report.

It's crucial that our state's public and private sector leaders support a message that we're "open for aspiration" at a time where Maryland is largely missing from the vast community of innovation addressing how we move people and goods and connect communities.

The state has not committed any public investment for technologies to advance magnetic levitation transportation systems, but this is an area of opportunity that is a focus of research and development in the U.S. and abroad.

Sincerely,



Mark Anthony Thomas
President & Chief Executive Officer

HB 170_MTBMA_UNF.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Sakata

Position: UNF



February 22, 2024

Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 170 – UNFAVORABLE – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association (“MTBMA”) has been and continues to serve as the voice for Maryland’s construction transportation industry since 1932. Our association is comprised of 200 members. MTBMA encourages, develops, and protects the prestige of the transportation construction and materials industry in Maryland by establishing and maintaining respected relationships with federal, state, and local public officials. We proactively work with regulatory agencies and governing bodies to represent the interests of the transportation industry and advocate for adequate state and federal funding for Maryland’s multimodal transportation system.

House Bill 170 prohibits the State from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation, or “maglev,” transportation system located or to be located in the State, except for expenditures related to the salaries of personnel assigned to review permits or other forms of approval for such a transportation system.

MTBMA opposes House Bill 170 because it is a boldfaced attack on the SCMAGLEV project currently in development in the region. SCMAGLEV is the type of transportation project that represents well-paying jobs for our workers, a cleaner environment, and transformational mobility opportunities for millions along the Northeast Corridor. This legislation is a solution in search of a problem. It is an attempt to block not only a potential source of thousands of transportation construction jobs, but a potential source of opportunity and public good for so many.

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail has been working hand-in-hand with over thirty federal, State, and local agencies in the years-long process being led by the Federal Railroad Administration. To layer over this established process with a blanket prohibition against any State funding would be tantamount to stopping the SCMAGLEV project and would put in question the legal framework upon which all large-scale infrastructure projects rely.

We appreciate you taking the time to consider our request for an **UNFAVORABLE** report on House Bill 170.

Thank you,

Michael Sakata
President and CEO
Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association

HB_170_UNF_LateTestimony_MikeTidwell

Uploaded by: Mike Tidwell

Position: UNF

February 20, 2024

HB0170

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chairman, Environment and
Transportation Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Chairman, Appropriations Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB0170 State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation
Transportation System

POSITION: **OPPOSE**

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the House Environment and Transportation and
Chair Barnes and Members of the House Appropriations Committee

My name is Mike Tidwell, Director of Chesapeake Action Network and I wish to share
my opposition to HB0170. Additionally, I'm expressing my strong support for the
Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail high-speed rail project that will connect Baltimore to
Washington D.C. in 15 minutes.

The mission of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) is to build a diverse
movement powerful enough to put our region on the path to climate stability, while using
our proximity to the nation's capital to inspire action in neighboring states, around the
country, and across the world. CCAN is the largest and oldest grassroots organization
dedicated exclusively to fighting for bold and just solutions to climate change in the
Chesapeake region of Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC. We also know that a
vibrant democracy is central to our success and we work to defend democratic integrity
wherever we can.

We envision an economy where energy efficiency and truly clean sources of power
sustain every aspect of our lives and dirty fossil fuels are phased out; where all
communities share equitably in the promise of a clean and healthy environment; where
millions of family-sustaining jobs form the backbone of our economy; and where we've
kept the increase in the global average temperature below 1.5 degrees Celsius,
protecting the most vulnerable communities in our region and the world from the worst
impacts of climate change.

As we build this movement, and work together to keep global temperatures from rising,
we know that some climate impacts are already locked in. These impacts are felt most
by those least responsible for them. That's why we're also helping the communities in
our region already experiencing the terrifying impacts of climate change to adapt to a
warming planet.

Now that world governments, including our own, have begun to make commitments that match the scale of the problem, we're making sure we do our part right here in the Chesapeake region. We'll continue to build a people-powered movement for bold and just solutions to climate change in the Chesapeake region of Maryland, Virginia, Washington, DC, and on Capitol Hill, while also acting as "first-responders" to federal action on the climate crisis and inspiring climate action across the country.

Again, we oppose HB0170 and support the Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) the developer behind the proposed Superconducting Magnetic Levitation (SCMAGLEV) train and soundly reject efforts by others to oppose its successful development through unwise legislation. We urge you to reject this Bill.

Thank you,

Mike Tidwell

Mike Tidwell, Director
Chesapeake Climate Action Network
6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 720
Takoma Park, Maryland 2091

Darryl Barnes Testimony HB170.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel Clark

Position: UNF



HB0170

The Honorable Mark Korman
Chair, House Environment and
Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Regina T. Boyce
Vice Chair, House Environment and,
Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB170 —STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED APPROPRIATIONS – MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Dear Chair Korman, Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committees:

This bill would:

- Prohibit the State from using any appropriations for a magnetic levitation transportation system located in the State.

Reasons to oppose this bill:

- Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail has never, and pledges to never request State appropriations.
- The Baltimore-Washington Maglev Project has been deemed by a third party (via the DEIS) that the Project would actually alleviate pressure on current State infrastructure and budget.
- In an attempt to stop the Baltimore-Washington Maglev Project, this bill limits the State from ever investing in *any* magnetic levitation transportation technology.
- Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail has continually paid millions in the Federally required State match portion of Federal grants for maglev deployment.

As important as the greater Washington D.C. region is to us, we recognize that a project like this is important to people beyond just the Washington D.C Metropolitan area. It represents an opportunity to create job, grow our minority businesses. Create growth and development opportunities for millions along the Northeast Corridor. This represents a future with less pollution and traffic, along with an emphasis of career opportunities and workforce development. This project will invest money back into our communities, providing a substantial and lasting effect on our region's economy. I urge



you to be a part of this future and vote in opposition of this bill.

Sincerely,

Darryl Barnes

Darryl Barnes
President & CEO
Bi-County Business Roundtable



GBBCC HB 170_Opposition.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel Clark

Position: UNF



**GREATER BALTIMORE BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
(GBBCC)**

February 22, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB0079 —STATE FINANCE –
PROHIBITED APPROPRIATIONS – MAGNETIC LEVITATION
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the

House Environment and Transportation Committee:

As a long-standing community partner, the focus of the Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce is on the facilitation and creation of business opportunities and resources for black-owned businesses, fostering business growth that results in increased employment of city residents, reinvestment in, and sustainability of predominantly African American communities - this bill stands in the way of the type of progress we stand for. This bill will limit the State's ability to ever invest in any magnetic levitation transportation technology – not just this project.

As important as the greater Baltimore region is to us, we recognize that a project like this is important to people beyond just the Baltimore area. It represents job opportunities, business

1401 Severn Street

Baltimore, MD 21230

443-424-2201

opportunities, and community growth and development opportunities for millions along the Northeast Corridor. It represents a future with less pollution, traffic, and with an emphasis on clean, efficient transportation and transit-oriented development. We want to be a part of this future. This bill is an attempt to needlessly block a potential for growth and opportunity for so many, and we ask that you submit an unfavorable report. We urge the Maryland Legislature to not set a precedent by using legislation on behalf of a few to unfairly limit a potential good for many.

Sincerely,
Kendrick Tilghman 
President and CEO
Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce

Ironworkers Local 5- Testimony HB0170 2024.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel Clark

Position: UNF

February 21, 2024

HB0170

The Honorable Mark Korman
Chair, House Environment and
Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Regina T. Boyce
Vice Chair, House Environment and
Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB0170 —STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED
APPROPRIATIONS – MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Dear Chair Korman, Chair T. Boyce, and Members of the House Environment and
Transportation Committees:

Ironworkers Local 5 wishes to voice its opposition to HB0170, a bill which prohibits the
State from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation transportation system.

We believe all possibilities for potential transportation infrastructure should be pursued
in a region that is choking in its congestion. While the “dream” of a maglev may seem
futuristic, the idea of promoting a bill that would completely prevent the State from ever
using an advanced technology that has the potential of positive enhancements for our
region and the Eastern seaboard is truly narrow-minded.

There has been no request for State funds that this bill aims to prevent, and any
financial commitment by the State of Maryland would be handled by the existing system
of budgetary checks and balances.

This is a project with possibilities, both in terms of transportation and in terms of
economic development. Many jobs could be created, an outcome which our economy
would certainly benefit from.

By supporting this obstructionist bill, Maryland announces its fear of innovation and its
distrust of private investment in infrastructure. Certainly not the preferred message for
our future generations. We urge you to oppose this bill which creates the image that
Maryland is not open to economic progress.

We ask you to please vote UNFAVORABLE on this short-sighted bill which reflects the
lack of long-range planning for our community’s future and that of the State. Thank you
for your consideration of our remarks.

Sincerely,



LARRY P. LUIS
Business Agent
301 599 0960 : o
301 599 0962 : f
240 302 8948 : c
lluis@ironworkers5.org : e

9301 Peppercorn Place • Largo, MD • 20774 // www.ironworkers5.org

LCAP Opposition Testimony Re_ HB170 2024.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel Clark

Position: UNF



Lakeland Community Association Partnership Inc.
Facebook: Lakeland Community Association Partnership
Pamela Oliver 410-814-9982 / 410-710-8118
lcap21230@gmail.com

February 22, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB0079 -STATE FINANCE - PROHIBITED APPROPRIATIONS - MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee,

At Lakeland Community Association Partnership Inc. (LCAP), we have three primary purposes: to promote, preserve, and protect our community. We do this by connecting and engaging with our residents, and also by supporting projects, programs, and activities that inspire growth within the neighborhood. The Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) Superconducting Magnetic Levitation train (SCMAGLEV) is a prime example of an opportunity to improve the quality of life for Lakeland residents. We encourage the project's development, which HB170 aims to directly negatively impact. **Therefore, we cannot support this bill.**

Aside from the concrete economic and employment opportunities that the project will deliver, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) affirms that the SCMAGLEV will directly benefit the communities surrounding project stations in many more ways. The DEIS states, "Transit-oriented development (TOD) opportunities around station locations, particularly in Baltimore, would potentially include expanded housing and employment opportunities for residents; increased retail, especially supermarkets; improved vehicular and bicycle safety; - enhanced security, lighting, and wayfinding; and added

community amenities (for example, recreation, landscaping, waterfront access).”

Yes, the economic and employment opportunities that the SCMAGLEV will provide are of equal importance to the above, but it’s these day-to-day improvements to the overall well-being of South Baltimore communities that make this project all the more promising. HB170 threatens to not only revoke these concrete opportunities for our communities that are outlined in the DEIS, but this bill also preemptively dampens future innovative ideas.

Moreover, the BWRR team has continually supported our community and have actively collaborated with us on multiple recent community events. I can conclusively state that they are committed to supporting our residents and their needs. As previously stated, our priority is to improve the lives of our Lakeland residents. This project will deliver those improvements. We are eager to welcome the SCMAGLEV to South Baltimore, as it will usher in an era of improved transit and investment in communities that have long been awaiting these opportunities.

Seeing as HB170 goes against our primary purposes as an organization and community association, we ask that you submit an unfavorable report of this bill.

Sincerely,

Pamela Oliver

Lakeland Community Association Partnership, Inc.
“Building a Better Community Together with LOVE”

Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce - Testimony

Uploaded by: Rachel Clark

Position: UNF



February 21, 2024

HB0170

The Honorable Mark Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Regina T. Boyce
Vice Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB0170 —STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED APPROPRIATIONS – MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Dear Chair Korman, Chair T. Boyce, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committees:

Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (MDHCC) was incorporated in the state of Maryland in 1986. Our organization aimed at developing a business network that would provide the Hispanic community with cohesion and strength. Since its inception, the MDHCC has worked towards bringing the issues and concerns of the state's thousands of Hispanic-owned businesses to the forefront of the state's economic agenda. The mission of the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is to promote the establishment, growth, prosperity and retention of Hispanic businesses, and those entities, and persons that support them in the State of Maryland

On behalf of the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's hundreds of member businesses and thousands of employees throughout the state, this letter is in opposition to HB0170 - State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System.

As this chamber is well-aware, the state is facing major budget shortfalls that will force leadership to make difficult choices about how to invest in Maryland's future. Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail have never asked the state for funds, meaning this bill addresses a non-existent issue. Why waste the legislature's time focused a on non-issue when there are clearly more pressing matters to attend to?



Furthermore, this legislation has not changed from prior appearances before this committee. Passage of this obstructionist legislation would make a strong statement about Maryland – that State leadership is closed to innovation.

We believe the State and the region should be open to any and all ideas that seek to ameliorate our pressing problem of congestion, which threatens our economy's growth on a daily basis. Large-scale investments in our state should be encouraged as they provide substantial jobs and enhancement to the economic health of our business community.

We ask you to please vote UNFAVORABLE on this short-sighted bill which reflects the lack of long-range planning for our community's future and that of the State. Thank you for your consideration of our remarks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marco V. Ávila, P.E." with a horizontal line underneath.

Marco V. Ávila, P.E.

President/CEO & Chairman of the Board
Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
marco.avila@mdhcc.org - 443-519-6909

NAN Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel Clark

Position: UNF



Greater
Baltimore Chapter
601 N. Eutaw Street – Suite 102
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

February 22, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB170 —STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED
APPROPRIATIONS – MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

On behalf of the National Action Network's Greater Baltimore Chapter, I am writing to express our organization's strong opposition to HB170.

The National Action Network is one of the leading civil rights organizations in the nation. We fight for one standard of justice and equal opportunities for all people regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, citizenship, criminal record, economic status, gender, gender expression, or sexuality.

Not only would the SCMAGLEV project bring unprecedented economic opportunity to our region, but the team behind the project has committed to diverse, equitable and inclusive project development. The team has worked extensively with South Baltimore communities to establish trust-based communication and is committed to facilitating equitable transit-oriented development.

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail, the developer behind the SCMAGLEV, is also committed to bringing \$4 billion in equitable opportunities to minority- and women-owned businesses in the state. This project represents the exact type of opportunity the National Action Network fights for daily. Preemptively removing the ability for Maryland citizens to invest in innovative technology that has the capacity to drastically improve the lives of many sends a clear message to citizens

that their voices, time, energy, and future don't matter.

I strongly urge the committee to consider the long-lasting implications that this bill will have on future technological investment within the state. Not only does this bill represent the dismissal of Maryland voices, but it is also incredibly short-sighted, as it curtails the future of all potential maglev projects.

Furthermore, it is worth repeating that the company behind the SCMAGLEV has pledged to not request appropriations and they haven't received any.

We ask for an unfavorable report on HB170 to keep Maryland's future bright for all of our hardworking citizens.

Sincerely,

LARRY YOUNG
Greater Baltimore Chapter National Action Network

Opposition Letter 02_22_24.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel Clark

Position: UNF



February 22, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB0079 —STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED
APPROPRIATIONS – MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee,

As representatives of the Mt. Winans community of South Baltimore, we write to thoroughly express our condemnation of House Bill and our support for the Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) superconducting magnetic levitation (SCMAGLEV) project. We encourage the proposal of a South Baltimore SCMAGLEV station, as it represents investment, commitment, and growth within South Baltimore and beyond. House Bill 170 seeks to actively destroy these opportunities, hence our strong opposition to this bill.

The Mt. Winans community, and all other South Baltimore communities for that matter, stand to benefit greatly from this project. Not only would the SCMAGLEV be an important part of Baltimore's renaissance, but the project will highlight the strengths and abilities South Baltimore, specifically, has to offer. BWRR has been extremely communicative and cooperative in this process, and we look forward to continuing to develop community outreach activities and planning documents in order to best benefit Mt. Winans and South Baltimore communities as a whole.

Furthermore, BWRR has pledged to not request state funds, so we view House Bill 170 as simply unnecessary, and has the potential to block similarly innovative and future-oriented projects. This bill is simply not written with communities in mind and actively stands in the way of progress. We strongly urge the committee to submit an unfavorable report on House Bill 170.

Sincerely,

Angela Smothers

President, Mt. Winans Community Association

Ray Jackson-HB0170 Letter 2-14-24.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel Clark

Position: UNF



15 West Aylesbury Road, Suite 400C
Lutherville-Timonium, MD 21093

RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB0170 —STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED APPROPRIATIONS – MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

February 21, 2024

The Honorable Mark Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Regina T. Boyce
Vice Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Korman, Chair T. Boyce, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committees:

As Managing Member of Stonewall Capital, I write today to voice my opposition to HB0170 and my support for the proposed SCMAGLEV project.

Stonewall Capital is the Master Developer of the ONE Westport project in South Baltimore. I've have been working with the developer of the SCMAGLEV as we sought the best path forward for both projects. In the process, I've learned how beneficial the SCMAGLEV will be to Maryland.

The project would bring gainful employment and business opportunities to Maryland. Combined with the new opportunities residents will see from the ONE Westport development, I believe the best is yet to come for South Baltimore.

House Bill 170 aims to stymie that future..

I truly believe we must fight for any and all opportunities to uplift communities like South Baltimore. The SCMAGLEV project is such an opportunity. Therefore, I advise the committee to give an unfavorable report on HB0170.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Jackson", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Ray Jackson

HB_170_UNF_LateTestimony_StanTucker

Uploaded by: Stanley Tucker

Position: UNF

February 22, 2024

HB0170

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chairman, Environment and
Transportation Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Chairman, Appropriations Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB0170 State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

POSITION: **OPPOSE**

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the House Environment and Transportation and Chair Barnes and Members of the House Appropriations Committee

My name is Stanley Tucker, CEO of Meridian Management and I wish to share my opposition to HB0170. First, HB0170 is fundamentally unsound, dangerously restrictive, extremely selfish and ill-conceived. The language in HB0170 will hinder progress in transportation for decades and deny a future generation of citizens, Maryland included an opportunity to experience high-speed rail transportation as a normal occurrence in their life experience. The project will connect Baltimore to Washington D.C. in 15 minutes and to New York in less than an hour... unreal!

Meridian Management Group, Inc. is a professional asset manager for economic development and private equity funds. The Management Group and its affiliates bring more than of 100 years of experience in financing and fostering small and medium-sized businesses. Our Mission is to create wealth via the efficient deployment of capital to under-served markets. MMG manages two state of Maryland financing funds under the Maryland Department of Commerce offering affordable financial assistance to small and minority businesses.

Over the course of 30 plus years the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus, in conjunction with MMG, has developed a unique strategy to provide a continuum of financing sources for small, minority, women and veteran-owned business. The MSBDFFA statute was later expanded to include any small business that does not meet the credit criteria of financial institutions and commercial sureties and, consequently are unable to obtain adequate financial assistance on reasonable terms. The Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority (MSBDFFA) was created in 1978 for the purpose of promoting the viability and expansion of businesses owned by economically or socially disadvantaged entrepreneurs. That same year, the Maryland State legislature enacted enabling legislation for the MSBDFFA Contract Financing Program.

Since 1980, MSBDFFA has provided approximately \$194 million in financing to 639 small businesses (71% of the financings were provided to minority businesses). MSBDFFA has been managed by the principals of MMG since 1982 as state employees and from 1995 as a private fund manager. MSBDFFA is recognized as a national model for creative financing of small, minority and women-owned businesses.

The impact of the language in is Bill could deny generations of small and medium-sized minority and women owned businesses from competing by denying them access to a vital source capital.

I urge you to vote against Bill 170.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stanley Tucker, CEO
Meridian Management Group
826 E. Baltimore Street,
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

HB0170 - Patriots Technology Training Center.pdf

Uploaded by: Thurman Jones

Position: UNF



www.patriots-ttc.org 301 925 9350 thurman@patriots-ttc.org
5800 Martin Luther King Jr. Highway
Seat Pleasant, MD 20743

February 19, 2024

HB0170

The Honorable Mark Korman
Chair, House Environment and
Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Regina T. Boyce
Vice Chair, House Environment and,
Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis , MD 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB0170 —STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED
APPROPRIATIONS – MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Dear Chair Guzzone, Chair Feldman, and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation and Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committees:

As president of Patriots Technology Training Center, I am writing to express our organization's strong **opposition to HB0170**.

For over 25 years, our organization's mission has been to empower students through technology by encouraging students to enter promising education and career paths in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.

The Patriots Technology Training Center has served thousands of students in the region through our countless programs, camps, workshops, conferences, and partnerships. We know which projects hold promise for today's (and tomorrow's) youth, and which projects don't. Northeast Maglev represents this promise, and with stations and headquarters in accessible, central locations to Maryland schools and universities, this project holds great potential for our younger generations to be a part of the most advanced transportation system in the world. Our students will have the ability to learn within an extremely unique technological pipeline.

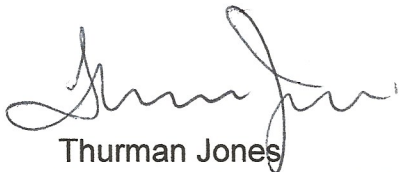
Further, we recognize that a project like the SCMAGLEV will benefit businesses and citizens far beyond the Baltimore-Washington region. It represents development and

community growth for millions along the Northeast Corridor. It symbolizes a future with less pollution and more transit-oriented development.

HB0170 is a clear attempt to stop the SCMAGLEV. But this legislation will not just negatively impact Northeast Maglev. It will ultimately stifle the opportunity for our future generations to benefit from promising career paths and apprenticeships, economic development, and a cleaner environment.

The Patriots Technology Training Center cannot support HB0170 as it proposes direct negative impacts on the state's current students and future leaders. We ask that you please submit an unfavorable report on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Thurman Jones', written in black ink.

Thurman Jones
President/Founder 1997

HB 170_MAA_UNF.pdf

Uploaded by: Tim Smith

Position: UNF

CHAIRMAN:
Jeff Graf
VICE CHAIRMAN
David Slaughter

MARYLAND ASPHALT ASSOCIATION



TREASURER:
Paul Bramble
SECRETARY:
Curtis Hall
PRESIDENT:
Tim Smith

February 22, 2024

Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 170 – UNFAVORABLE – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Asphalt Association (MAA) is comprised of 19 producer members representing more than 48 production facilities, 25 contractor members, 25 consulting engineer firms and 41 other associate members. MAA works proactively with regulatory agencies to represent the interests of the asphalt industry both in the writing and interpretation of state and federal regulations that may affect our members. We also advocate for adequate state and federal funding for Maryland's multimodal transportation system.

House Bill 170 prohibits the State from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation, or "maglev," transportation system located or to be located in the State, except for expenditures related to the salaries of personnel assigned to review permits or other forms of approval for such a transportation system.

MAA opposes House Bill 170 because it is a boldfaced attack on the SCMAGLEV project currently in development in the region. SCMAGLEV is the type of transportation project that represents well-paying jobs for our workers, a cleaner environment, and transformational mobility opportunities for millions along the Northeast Corridor. This legislation is a solution in search of a problem. It is an attempt to block not only a potential source of thousands of transportation construction jobs, but a potential source of opportunity and public good for so many.

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail has been working hand-in-hand with over thirty federal, State, and local agencies in the years-long process being led by the Federal Railroad Administration. To layer over this established process with a blanket prohibition against any State funding would be tantamount to stopping the SCMAGLEV project and would put in question the legal framework upon which all large-scale infrastructure projects rely.

We appreciate you taking the time to consider our request for an **UNFAVORABLE** report on House Bill 170.

Sincerely,

Tim E. Smith, P.E.
President
Maryland Asphalt Association

HB_170_UNF_LateTestimony_VictoriaLeonard

Uploaded by: Victoria Leonard

Position: UNF



February 22, 2024

The Honorable Mark Korman, Chair
The Honorable Regina T. Boyce, Vice Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Testimony of Victoria Leonard on
HB 170 – State Finance Prohibited Appropriations Magnetic Levitation Transportation System
Position: Oppose**

Thank you Chair Korman and Vice Chair Boyce and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committees for the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 170.

My name is Victoria Leonard. I am here on behalf of the Baltimore-DC Building Trades (BDCBT). The BDCBT represents 28 construction trade unions across Maryland, Northern Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Combined, our trade unions represent more than 30,000 of skilled craft professionals in the construction industry.

BDCBT strongly opposes HB 170. SCMAGLEV does not include any state financing, and it doesn't need it. Construction costs will be split among the Japanese government, the Central Japan Railway, and the U.S. government. Independent ridership and revenue studies validate the financial feasibility of the project, and that operating and maintenance costs will be offset by revenues. Moreover, the environmental study was funded by the federal government through the Maglev Deployment Program, with matching funds from the private sector.

BDCBT believes that the SCMAGLEV would transform the Northeast region by reducing travel times between New York City and Washington, DC to under one hour. The first phase would connect Washington, DC and Baltimore in just 15 minutes. It would allow our nation's capital to lead the way in adopting the fastest and most advanced transportation system in the world.

At the same time, the project would provide much-needed employment opportunities, including quality union construction jobs that will create a pathway to the middle class for Baltimore-Washington area residents. According to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), construction of the first phase alone would result in the creation of more than 160,000 regional jobs. Another benefit is that the project would take up to 16 million cars off the road, substantially reducing congestion and improving our region's air quality.

BDCBT urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report on HB 170.

Sincerely,

Victoria Leonard

Baltimore-DC Building Trades

HB170 Victoria Leonard BDCBT (OPPOSE).pdf

Uploaded by: Victoria Leonard

Position: UNF



Electrical Workers

Insulators

Boilermakers

United Association

Plumbers & Gas Fitters

Sprinkler Fitters

Steam Fitters

Roofers

Cement Masons

Teamsters

Laborers

Bricklayers

Ironworkers

Sheet Metal Workers

Elevator Constructors

Painters

Operating Engineers

Carpenters

February 22, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
The Honorable Regina Boyce, Vice Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building Room 251
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Testimony of Victoria Leonard on
HB 170 – State Finance Prohibited Appropriations Magnetic Levitation
Transportation System**

Position: Oppose

Thank you Chair Korman and Vice Chair Boyce and members of the House Economic Matters Committee for the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 170.

My name is Victoria Leonard. I am here on behalf of the Baltimore-DC Building Trades (BDCBT). The BDCBT represents 28 construction trade unions across Maryland, Northern Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Combined, our trade unions represent more than 30,000 of skilled craft professionals in the construction industry.

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BDCBT urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report on HB 170.

Value on Display... Everyday.



HB_170_UNF_LateTestimony_VonnyaPettigrew

Uploaded by: Vonnya Pettigrew

Position: UNF



February 20, 2024

HB0170

The Honorable Mark Korman
Chair, House Environment and
Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Regina T. Boyce
Vice Chair, House Environment and,
Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis , MD 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB0170-STATE FINANCE - PROHIBITED
APPROPRIATIONS - MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committees:

Since 2006 Root Branch Media has served the DMV, offering services in video production, creative development, motion graphics, branded content, storyboarding, casting, cinematography, photography, sound design, graphic, and web design. We are most notably known for our Film Academy, providing film and digital media arts instruction to youth in grades K - 12 in partnership with school districts and youth organizations throughout our region. Our mission is to give students (particularly students of color) the voice they deserve and the chance to use media in a meaningful way that rewrites the narrative of how they are seen in and depicted by the media.

This bill will limit the State's ability to ever invest in any magnetic levitation transportation technology - not just this project. As important as the greater Washington D.C. region is to us, we recognize that a project like this is important to people beyond just the Washington D.C., Maryland, and Virginia areas. It represents job opportunities, business opportunities, and community growth and development opportunities for millions along the Northeast Corridor. It represents a future with less pollution and traffic, and with an emphasis on creation of career opportunities and workforce development. This project will invest money back into our local communities, providing a substantial and lasting effect on our region's economy. We want to be a part of this future.

This bill is an attempt to needlessly block the potential for growth and opportunity for so many, and we ask that you submit an unfavorable report. We urge the Maryland Legislature to not set a precedent by using legislation on behalf of a few to unfairly limit a potential good for many.

Sincerely,

Dr. Vonnya Pettigrew, CEO
Root Branch Media Group

PHONE
(O) 410-637-3530

**SOCIAL
MEDIA**
RootBranchMG

ADDRESS
2220 Boston Street
Baltimore, MD 21231