



January 29, 2025

The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
The Honorable Jim Rosapepe, Vice Chair
Budget and Tax Committee
101 James Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Testimony of Ray Baker on
SB 55 – State Finance Prohibited Appropriations Magnetic Levitation Transportation System
Position: UNFAVORABLE**

Thank you Chair Guzzone and Vice Chair Rosapepe and members of the Senate Budget and Tax Committee for the opportunity to testify in opposition to SB 55. My name is Ray Baker. I am the Maryland Director for 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.

The BDCBT strongly opposes SB 55. 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 revenues will offset operating and maintenance costs. Moreover, the federal government funded the environmental study through its Maglev Deployment Program, with matching funds from the private sector.

The 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. At the same time, the project would provide much-needed job 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.

Finally, SB 55 is a preemptive action to a problem that does not exist and would ultimately only create future complications for our state's potential investment opportunities.

The BDCBT urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report on SB 55.

Ray Baker
Maryland Director, BDCBT
RBaker@BDCBT.org
410.585.7862