

January 29, 2025

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Senator Brian Feldman, Chair
Senate Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 55 – UNFAVORABLE – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

Dear Chair Guzzone, Chair Feldman and Members of the Committees:

My name is Deborah Harrington, and I am a resident of Prince George's County, Maryland. I am writing to express my strong opposition to **Senate Bill 55**, which seeks to prohibit the use of state funds for the development of a magnetic levitation (maglev) transportation system in Maryland. The Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project represents an opportunity for Maryland to lead the nation in historic investments in the future of transportation. However, this bill puts at risk this opportunity to improve our infrastructure and grow our economy.

As Maryland faces a \$3 billion budget deficit, we need to be focused on transformational infrastructure projects that can fuel long-term economic growth, create thousands of jobs, and help modernize our state's transportation system. The Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project—a high-speed maglev system connecting Washington, D.C., and Baltimore, with future plans to extend to New York City—is one of the most promising projects on the table. It represents a unique opportunity to position Maryland as a leader in sustainable transportation and economic development. I believe this project is too important for Maryland's future to be blocked by legislation like Senate Bill 55.

I had the privilege of riding the maglev train in Tokyo last summer, and I can say firsthand that it was a revolutionary experience. The smooth, quiet ride, the speed, and the efficiency of the system were unlike anything I had experienced before. The maglev system in Japan connects major cities and has transformed how people move across the country, drastically cutting travel times while providing a sustainable, environmentally friendly mode of transport. Maryland has the opportunity to bring this same level of innovation to our region—and not just between Baltimore and Washington, D.C., but also in the broader context of connecting the Northeast Corridor, extending eventually to New York City. This project is a critical step toward improving our regional connectivity, and blocking it would be a major step backward for Maryland.

The SCMAGLEV project will generate thousands of high-wage jobs in the construction, operation, and long-term maintenance of the system. These jobs will provide much-needed economic opportunity, especially in historically underserved communities. The construction of this high-speed rail will create jobs not only for engineers and construction workers but also for a wide range of other sectors, including technology, logistics, and manufacturing. At a time when Maryland is facing a budget deficit, this is exactly the kind of investment we need to stimulate our economy and provide a pathway to long-term growth.

The SCMAGLEV project is also critical to meeting Maryland's climate goals. Powered by electricity and producing zero emissions, this system would be a major step toward reducing our carbon footprint and combating climate change. The environmental benefits cannot be overstated—by reducing the number of cars on the road, the maglev system will help alleviate congestion, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and improve air quality, particularly in urban areas where pollution is most pronounced. This is especially important for communities of color, who are disproportionately impacted by environmental degradation.

Having utilized the system and technology, I firmly believe that Maryland has the potential to lead the way in transforming transportation in the U.S. Just as Japan has revolutionized intercity travel, the SCMAGLEV system could transform the way we move people and goods along the Baltimore-Washington-New York Corridor.

Maryland deserves the opportunity to embrace this cutting-edge technology, especially given the promise it holds for creating jobs, improving connectivity, and addressing environmental challenges.

I urge the committee to **reject Senate Bill 55**. This bill stands in the way of smart projects, like the Northeast Maglev, which would be a critical initiative that will benefit Maryland's economy, workforce, and environment for generations to come. We cannot afford to block this transformational opportunity, especially when it has the potential to reshape our state's future and ensure that Maryland remains at the forefront of transportation innovation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Deborah Harrington