

January 29, 2025

SB0055

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Maryland General Assembly
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB0055—STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED
APPROPRIATIONS – MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ian Rainey, and I am the Senior Vice President of Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR). I appear before you today to convey our strong opposition to SB0055.

SB0055 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.

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, 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 support.

Additionally, our current rail infrastructure has already nearly met its physical limits. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) conducted by MDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) confirms that the Baltimore—Washington, DC Maglev service 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 maglev] free up capacity for additional travelers without making public investment to add capacity.”

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

We need new world class transit systems to build our economy, create jobs, fight climate change, and provide workforce opportunity to our diverse population. SB0055 would signal to Maryland citizens and to the world that the state is closed to innovative, future-oriented, safe solutions to our worsening transportation issues.

For these reasons, Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail strongly opposes SB0055 and urges the committees to submit an unfavorable report. Thank you for the opportunity to appear.



Sincerely,

Ian Rainey
Ian Rainey
Senior Vice President