
THE BALTIMORE TIMES

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:

I am Paris Brown, Publisher of The Baltimore Times. The Baltimore Times is a free, community newspaper that is distributed to the residents of Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Anne Arundel County. For over 40 years, The Baltimore Times has inspired, empowered, and kept residents informed about city and state issues that impact the quality of life as well as share stories that are not covered by mainstream media. We are dedicated to reporting, events and partnerships that improve the quality of life for the city and county residents. The Baltimore Times is committed to advocacy work that promotes economic development, health, housing and local businesses, and environmental issues. Access to capital and opportunities for Black and minority-owned businesses is important to the wellness of our community as well as the importance of health and wealth of our communities. The Baltimore Times has been vocal on national issues, and policies that support the sustainability of local media outlets, and how city and state policies can help create sustainability through increased advertising and tax credits to small businesses that advertise with local community news outlets. This bill was presented to the Maryland State General Assembly last session.

Senate Bill 55 prohibits the State from appropriating funds for the development or construction of magnetic levitation (maglev) transportation systems, directly targeting the Baltimore-Washington SCMagLEV project. *The Baltimore Times* strongly opposes this legislation, as it risks halting a transformative project that promises to deliver substantial economic, environmental, and social benefits to Maryland residents.

As part of a delegation of Black and Brown business leaders and civil rights advocates, I had the privilege to join a group focused on learning about the significant minority business opportunities tied to Northeast Maglev's \$4 billion pledge to Minority and Women-Owned Businesses. This trip marks a crucial step in preparing the minority business community for active participation in a project that promises to revolutionize transportation through high-speed rail between Washington, DC, Baltimore, and eventually New York. With an intensive itinerary that included tours of manufacturing facilities, construction sites, and a ride on the Maglev at 311 mph, this experience provided valuable insights into how the \$10 billion infrastructure for the Maglev train project could shape the future of the Northeast Corridor and impact cities and local communities along the route.

One of the most impactful aspects of the Maglev project is its potential to make travel through one of the world's largest metropolises easy, safe, and convenient, while also serving as a catalyst for growth in various industry and business sectors. The potential impact on Baltimore City could be significant, leading to increased tourism and convention business from cities along the East Coast Corridor. Enhanced ease of travel to and from BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport will make the city more accessible, attracting more visitors and boosting the local economy. This

ease of travel might also draw talent from other cities due to the improved commuting options, providing greater opportunities for businesses to attract additional skilled workers.

The Baltimore Times supports the SCMAGLEV project because it represents progress, equity, and innovation. Senate Bill 55 would block Maryland's ability to lead in transportation modernization, stalling a project that has the potential to transform lives across the state.

For these reasons, we urge the committee to issue an **unfavorable** report on Senate Bill 55 and allow Maryland to seize this opportunity for growth and advancement.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Paris Brown, Publisher
The Baltimore Times