



MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

January 27, 2025

Bill: <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2025RS/bills/sb/sb0055F.pdf>

Committees: Budget and Taxation and Education, Energy, and the Environment

Testimony on: SB0055—State Finance—Prohibited Appropriations—Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

Position: Support SB0055

The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) strongly supports SB0055 and urges the Committees to issue a favorable report. This bill would forbid the State and any of its units or instrumentalities from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation transportation system (MAG-LEV), aside from salaries for personnel to assigned to review permits or other forms of approval for a MAG-LEV system.

MOS opposes the proposed Mag-Lev line between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, because it would destroy several hundreds of acres of forest on the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center or Patuxent Research Refuge, part of last large undeveloped green spaces between the two cities.

The proposed Mag-Lev line would do little to reduce road traffic between the cities, as the fares would be prohibitively expensive, and there would be only three stops. Funds will be better spent on improving existing rail corridors, which will benefit commuters, while preserving habitat.

We urge a favorable Committee Report from the Committee. North America has lost almost 30% of its birds since 1970.¹ Loss of habitat is one on the major causes of these declines. Mag-Lev will destroy acres of habitat, slice up the largest green space in Central Maryland, and do little to reduce traffic and associated air pollution. MOS asks the Committees to issue a favorable report on HB0055.

Sincerely,

¹ Rosenberg, Kenneth V. et al, Decline of the North American avifauna, Science, VOL 366, NO. 6451, 19 September 2019, https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.aaw1313?adobe_mc=MCORGID%3D242B6472541199F70A4C98A6%2540AdobeOrg%7CTS%3D1707754028

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kurt R. Schwarz', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kurt R. Schwarz
Conservation Chair Emeritus
Maryland Ornithological Society
www.mdbirds.org