



## **Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 55**

**Submitted by: The Greater Washington Black Chamber of Commerce**

**January 22, 2025**

To: The Honorable Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee and the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Dear Committee Members,

The Greater Washington Black Chamber of Commerce (GWBC) respectfully submits this testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 55, titled "State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System."

Maryland General Assembly

### **Overview of Senate Bill 55**

Senate Bill 55 seeks to prohibit the State of Maryland and its instrumentalities from using any appropriations for the development or implementation of a magnetic levitation (Maglev) transportation system within the state. The bill does allow for expenditures related to the salaries of personnel assigned to review permits or other forms of approval for such systems.

Maryland General Assembly

### **Economic Implications**

The GWBC is dedicated to promoting economic development and fostering opportunities for Black-owned businesses in the Greater Washington area.

Greater Washington DC Black Chamber of Commerce

The introduction of a Maglev transportation system presents a significant opportunity for economic growth, including:



- **Job Creation:** The construction and maintenance of the Maglev system would create numerous jobs, providing employment opportunities for local residents, including those from underrepresented communities.
- **Business Opportunities:** The development phase would necessitate a range of services—from construction to consulting—offering Black-owned businesses the chance to participate in substantial state contracts.
- **Enhanced Connectivity:** Improved transportation infrastructure can lead to increased commerce and accessibility, benefiting small businesses and stimulating local economies.

By prohibiting state appropriations for the Maglev project, Senate Bill 55 effectively eliminates these potential economic benefits.

### **Equity and Inclusion Concerns**

The GWBCC emphasizes the importance of equitable economic development. Large-scale infrastructure projects like the Maglev system can be structured to include minority-owned businesses, ensuring that the growth they generate is inclusive. Prohibiting funding for such projects may inadvertently hinder efforts to bridge economic disparities within the state.

### **Environmental Considerations**

While we acknowledge that environmental concerns are associated with large infrastructure projects, advancements in technology have made it possible to develop transportation systems that are both efficient and environmentally friendly. Maglev technology, in particular, offers a sustainable alternative to traditional transportation methods, potentially reducing carbon emissions and reliance on fossil fuels.

### **Conclusion**

In light of the potential economic, social, and environmental benefits, the Greater Washington Black Chamber of Commerce opposes Senate Bill 55. We urge the committees to consider the broader implications of this legislation and to explore avenues that allow for the responsible development of the Maglev transportation system, ensuring that it serves as a catalyst for inclusive economic growth in Maryland.



Thank you for considering our perspective on this critical issue.

Sincerely,



Aisha Bond, Esq.

President/CEO

Greater Washington Black Chamber of Commerce