

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 Minority Business Counts (MMBC) is coalition of Black-Led and Supporting Organizations that advocate for Minority Business Opportunities in government and corporate procurement. Our members include: The Greater Baltimore Urban League, Associated Black Charities, The Maryland Black Chamber of Commerce, The Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce, Greater Washington Urban League, Bi-County Business Roundtable, Howard County Chamber of Commerce, Southern Maryland Minority Chamber of Commerce, Black Girls Vote. We were organized to support and promote the Moore-Miller Administration in its Executive Order #01.01.2023.03 and efforts with the State of Maryland as well as Maryland-Based Corporations.

Senate Bill 55 prohibits the State from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation (maglev) transportation system located or to be located in the State, except for expenditures related to the salaries of personnel assigned to review permits or other forms of approval for such a transportation system. This legislation risks dismantling the progress and potential of the Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project, an initiative that offers unparalleled opportunities for Maryland's businesses, workforce, and communities.

Last summer, had invested a week to travel to Tokyo with a group of other Black and Latino business and civil rights leaders focused on learning first-hand from the experience of riding on a magnetic levitation train and seeing what a catalyst its construction was for development along its path. That trip further informed by perspective of the proposed business opportunities tied to Northeast Maglev's \$4 billion pledge to Minority and Women-Owned Businesses.

The SCMAGLEV project stands as a key driver of inclusive economic growth in Maryland. It prioritizes equitable access to resources and opportunities for underrepresented entrepreneurs. The scope of this project extends beyond direct job creation, offering meaningful contracts and partnerships that uplift local suppliers and service providers across industries. These efforts represent a vital investment in Maryland's diverse business landscape, where the long-term benefits of such projects are deeply felt.

The project also serves as a platform to expand Maryland's economic horizons by integrating advanced technology into critical infrastructure. By incorporating maglev systems, Maryland could establish itself as a global hub for innovation in transportation. This initiative allows local institutions and businesses to collaborate in shaping the future of sustainable transit while developing specialized expertise that ensures the state's workforce remains competitive in emerging sectors.

Senate Bill 55 sends a discouraging message to businesses and industries considering Maryland as a home for investment. Limiting funding prematurely creates barriers to progress and risks stalling a transformative initiative capable of delivering significant economic and social benefits.

We urge the committee to issue an **unfavorable** report on Senate Bill 55 and allow Maryland to continue investing in projects that build a stronger, more inclusive, and prosperous future.

Sincerely,

Adrian Harpool
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My Minority Business Counts Coalition
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