

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:

The Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EAS Carpenters Union), strives to be on equity with employers, establish shorter workdays and increase pay for the work provided. Most importantly, they want to spread their work among as many members as possible. EAS Carpenters has made great advances throughout North America and has established itself as one of the nation's largest, strongest and most respected unions. Today, we have over 532,000 members, representing 872 locals. EAS Carpenters, opposes SB0055 and respectfully requests the bill be given an unfavorable report.

This bill prohibits the State from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation (Maglev) transportation system located or to be located in the State. The bill does not apply to expenditures for the salaries of personnel assigned to review permits or other forms of approval for a Maglev transportation system.

SB0055 effectively prohibits the construction of a Maglev system anywhere in Maryland. The bill does so regardless of the benefits from its construction, including potentially thousands of construction jobs, and the tax revenues Maryland would realize from income and sales taxes. It does so regardless of the benefits of reduced vehicle traffic and associated accidents and exhaust emissions, and reduced or, practically speaking, eliminated rail accidents. It does so regardless of the benefits to both the Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Metropolitan areas of speedy commuting. It does so without any consideration of alternative financing mechanisms. Indeed, SB0079 does so without any regard for or consideration of the merits of Maglev or the potential for solutions to issues that opponents may have regarding Maglev.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) are in the process of preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the potential impacts of constructing and operating a Maglev system between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland with an intermediate stop at BWI Airport. There are 13 alternatives moving forward in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). There is a No Build alternative and 12 Build Alternatives. SB0055 would ban Maglev regardless of the conclusions of the EIS, including potentially positive impacts in reducing global warming.

Decisions about appropriate transportation modalities should be made based on the expert advice of transportation planners and Federal, State, and county transportation professionals. Public policy considerations are always appropriate, but should be based on a complete understanding of all of the relevant factors, pro and con, not a priori conclusions. Essentially SB0055 takes the position "my mind is made up; don't confuse me with the facts." Accordingly, Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters opposes SB0055 and respectfully requests the bill be given an **unfavorable** report.

Sincerely,

Lamar Mutts, Council Representative
Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters