

Written Testimony in Support of SB55.pdf

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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of SB55 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

SB 55 aims to prohibit appropriation for a magnetic levitation transportation system in the State; providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries; and generally relating to State appropriations for magnetic levitation transportation systems.

Despite decades of study and billions in proposed funding, the maglev project remains fraught with insurmountable challenges that demand a re-evaluation of its place in Maryland's future. Senate Bill 55 seeks to address these concerns by prohibiting state appropriations for maglev projects, with an exception for expenditures related to salaries and oversight.

The harmful impact of the maglev project that are weighing Maryland communities include though are not limited to:

- The considerate devastation to nearby communities, due to disruption and potential destruction of resident properties.
- Damages that fundamentally alter Maryland's ecosystem. Federal environmental reviews have detailed the devastating effects of the clearing of 450 acres of trees, disruption of 22 acres of wetlands, and the degradation of nearly 13,000 linear feet of streams.
- Significant alterations to public lands managed by agencies such as the National Park Service and NASA, undermining decades of conservation efforts.
- With projected costs ranging from \$13.8 billion to \$16.8 billion, the project represents an enormous financial burden.
- The expected average fare of \$60 per trip creates accessibility concerns, making the system a luxury for the few rather than a solution for the many.
- While proponents argue it would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by removing millions of car trips annually, the infrastructure required for maglev would rely heavily on electricity sourced from fossil fuels, thereby diminishing its environmental benefits.

Public opposition to the maglev project has been significant and sustained. Civic associations, environmental groups, and elected officials have voiced concerns about the disruption to communities, businesses, and green spaces.

SB 55 represents a prudent and necessary measure to protect Maryland's resources and communities from the adverse impacts of the maglev project. By prohibiting state appropriations, this bill ensures that taxpayer dollars are directed toward initiatives that align with Maryland's values of environmental stewardship, financial sustainability, and protection of our community.

By passing SB 55, we can safeguard our resources, protect our environment, and prioritize projects that truly benefit all Marylanders.

Therefore, I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 55.

CSG Support SB 55 Maglev Prohibit Appropriations.p

Uploaded by: Cheryl Cort

Position: FAV

Testimony on SB 55
State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System
Budget and Taxation Committee

By Cheryl Cort

Date: January 27, 2025

Position: **SUPPORT**

Please accept this testimony on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the leading organization advocating for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the Washington, DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

SB 55 would prohibit the state from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation transportation system in the state. We support this bill because the proponents of the Maglev project claim that it does not require public subsidies. Thus, this bill ensures that the public will not be subjected to paying for costs associated with the planning of this private investor-driven project.

We have been strong supporters of major rail improvements in the Northeast corridor, but are convinced that the proposed Baltimore-Washington Superconducting Magnetic Levitation (SCMAGLEV) project is the wrong technology and design for the Washington-Baltimore corridor and the NE Corridor as a whole.

Instead of allowing public subsidies to be expended on Maglev, we urge the state to lead coordinated efforts on significant investments repairing and improving both the Amtrak and commuter rail programs. Investing in the Maryland MARC and Amtrak NE Corridor expansion plans would more effectively serve the transit needs of our region and the NE Corridor. Upgrades to the existing rail system could also more easily be extended to other destinations like New York and Boston, than would be the case with Maglev which would need entirely new right-of-way through the very densely developed Northeast. Existing rail stations are located in more central and well-established transit hubs, like DC's Union Station.

The Maglev project would have a negative impact on racial and social equity. Construction would plow through majority Black Prince George's County, but the residents of Prince George's County would not be able to take advantage of the project, since the technology and design speed are such that there will only be stops in DC, at BWI Airport, and at Penn Station in Baltimore. Environmental Justice (EJ) communities would be disproportionately impacted, with 80 percent of impacted parcels located in EJ communities. High ticket prices would also disadvantage lower income travelers.

A much more cost-effective solution would be to invest in improving our existing infrastructure and upgrade over time to high-speed rail standards. In conclusion, we urge the state to pursue upgrades to the nation's existing rail infrastructure, including high-speed rail, in lieu of the SCMAGLEV.

Thank you for your consideration.

20250129 - Support SB0055-No Maryland Funds for SC

Uploaded by: Dan Woomer

Position: FAV

**Title: Support Maryland General Assembly Senate Bill 0055
State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation
Transportation System**

Testimony by:

Daniel E. Woomer
Board member - Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit (MCRT)
Member - Citizens Against the SCMaglev (CATS)

Hearing: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
West Miller Senate Building
11 Bladen Street - Room 3
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025

Time: 10:30 am

Summary:

I join with the Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit (MCRT) and the Citizens Against the SCMaglev (CATS), and Senators Washington, Augustine and Beidle, to support this session's Senate Bill 0055 – "Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System" which prohibits "the State and certain units and instrumentalities of the State from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation transportation system in the State; and providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries."

Building the SCMaglev train will destroy large areas withing the last large protected green space on the east coast, bring irreparable environmental harm to surrounding areas, potentially threatening the health of our residents, and it will require government subsidies to build, maintain, and operate the system. It is very unlikely that revenues generated by ridership will cover the maintenance and operation cost of running this system. MCRT's and other's research have come to this same conclusion. Coupled with the tight budget funding for 2025, Maryland taxpayer funds would be better spent on high-priority transportation infrastructure projects that benefit all Maryland's residents, not just the few wealthy who can afford the cost to ride the SCMaglev. While I, MCRT and CATS oppose the building of the SCMaglev, we strongly support the continued enhancements of existing transportation systems such as MARC and Amtrak, which benefit all Marylanders.

Testimony:

Good afternoon. My name is Daniel E. Woomer, I am the past president and a current Board member of the MCRT, as well as longtime member of CATS. I am pleased to provide this written testimony to you today in support of SB0055.

There are many reasons I, MCRT, CATS, our communities, environmental groups, Baltimore City, Washington D.C., and Anne Arundel and Prince George's Counties, as well as several

federal agencies are opposed to building the SCMaglev:

- (1) The train will not serve all Marylanders, yet it will destroy communities and green spaces and its emissions will damage human health.
- (2) There are unanswered questions about the actual safety of the train itself.
- (3) It will generate insufficient revenue, therefore requiring government subsidies.
- (4) It will follow previous world experiences with such systems, many of which have failed or are being maintained with large government subsidies.
- (5) The Northeast Maglev (TNEM) and Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) have made many claims about jobs and revenues but have yet to share their analyses supporting these claims.
- (6) The need for far more high-value and equitable transportation infrastructure improvements, such as MARC and Amtrak, far outweigh expending excessive funds on building and operating the SCMaglev.

(1) SCMaglev Does Not Serve Marylanders, Yet Destroys Our Communities and Green Spaces.

The SCMaglev project will result in:

- Detrimental impacts on swaths of homes, businesses, historic sights, and greenspaces throughout Prince George's County with the erection of the elevated sections of the SCMaglev.
- The destruction and/or disruption of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC), NASA's Optic Research Center, and the Patuxent Research Reserve (PRR), while bringing industrial level of pollution to the local streams, wetlands, the Patuxent River, and the Chesapeake Bay.

Note: In a letter dated December 22, 2023, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has received and reviewed BWRR's Water Quality Certification (WQC) and has announced MDE intends to deny BWRR's WQC.¹

- The potential disruption of the Anne Arundel County aquifer.
- The potential release of toxins, carcinogens, and radon gas collected in the SCMaglev tunneled sections into our communities through their surface ventilation facilities.
- Concerns about our schools' structures, personnel, and students associated with the impact of a high-speed, oscillating magnetic field train running under them.

Note: the Anne Arundel Board of Education noted their written objection to building and operating the SCMaglev on November 1, 2017.

- Increased vehicle traffic with the construction and operation of the SCMaglev facilities and

¹ To read the MDE letter, go to: https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/faf63c_9f3ca64e47ba489aba224e4473bf2d2a.pdf

track maintenance equipment on I-95 and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway.

- With only one stop in Anne Arundel County and no stops in Prince George's County, the SCMaglev provides little to no benefit to the residents and businesses in our counties, yet these counties will face the greatest burden of the disruption and destruction.

(2) Unanswered Questions About the Actual Safety of the Train Itself Remain.

- Past proposals to build maglev systems in Florida, Pennsylvania, and Maryland using the German system were not approved for good reason.
- Despite certification by the German government that their maglev system was safe, on September 22, 2006, 70 percent of the passengers were killed and the rest injured in a maglev accident in Lathen, Germany.
- The Japanese government seeks to assure us of the safety of their SCMaglev. However, the number of passengers carried to date on their test track far less than the typical number carried by the Washington Metro (pre-COVID-19) in a single day.

Note: Japanese success with their wheel-rail trains does not automatically transfer to maglev technology.

- Justifications for the ongoing building of their SCMaglev are being questioned in Japan. The planned 2027 date for starting the first operation of the Tokyo to Nagoya line has significantly slid into an unclear future. If built here, this would make the United States the first place where the safety of SCMaglev technology would be tested in a high-frequency commercial operation.
- The Japanese SCMaglev has many unresolved safety issues that need to be addressed. Safety Rules of Particular Applicability (RPA) need to be developed by the Federal Railroad Administration before the project is authorized.
- The crashworthiness of the vehicles must be assessed for the safety of the passengers if something goes wrong. The SCMaglev should not evade the safety rules now required for Amtrak, MARC, or any train system operating in the United States. Promoters of the SCMaglev argue that the computer systems will prevent a crash, but so did the German government before that fateful day when 70 percent of passengers were killed in the Lathen maglev accident.
- The risk of the levitated SCMaglev train rising out of the guideway must be evaluated. What would happen should the train hit an object that momentarily lifts the front end while travelling at over 300 miles-per-hour? Currently there are no physical restraints to prevent the train from rising out of the guideway.
- Below 93 miles per hour, the train will ride on retractable rubber tires. This raises many safety issues. If there is a power interruption, the retracted rubber wheels may need to immediately support the train travelling at over 300 miles-per-hour before it comes to a stop, which is twice the landing speed of a commercial aircraft.
- The dangers from the electromagnetic radiation exposure for humans and wildlife need to be addressed. The BWRR *Alternatives Report* (November 2018) stated that people underneath the guideway
“ . . . need to maintain a minimum distance of 20 feet below the magnets . . . ”

(3) SCMaglev Will Generate Insufficient Revenue Requiring Government Subsidies.

Having followed the SCMaglev project since its initial announcement, it is still difficult to see how this system will generate the revenues needed to operate and maintain itself without the need for government subsidies. We all have received mixed signals for the TNEM and BWRR leadership, who at one time state that all the funds needed for maintenance and operation (M&O) will be generated by ridership, and on other occasions that any system such as the one proposed requires private and public support, as in the use of tax dollars to provide financial support. Independent research by Dr. Owen Kelly, of George Washington University, seriously challenges BWRR ridership statements.

Dr. Owen's published research, *Ridership Revisited: The Official Ridership Forecast for the Proposed Baltimore-Washington Maglev Is a Factor of Ten Too High*², provides a "deep dive" employing transparent methodology to project the likely SCMaglev ridership for the Baltimore to Washington, D.C. segment. His findings reinforce the report prepared by Ms. Carol Park³ of the Center for Business and Economic Competitiveness at the Maryland Public Policy Institute which discussed the demographics of Baltimore City. She argues the economic basis to support the SCMaglev does not exist as it does in Japan. In addition, Randal O'Toole of the Cato Institute states: "Clearly, the main users of the maglev line will be bureaucrats and lobbyists who will have someone else (mainly taxpayers) pay their way. What is less clear is why ordinary taxpayers should pay to build a line that they won't ever use . . ."⁴

To date, no major public rail system in the world operates without government subsidy. Amtrak is one of the best (pre-COVID), generating revenues that covered most of its annual M&O costs, and has shown improvement over the past decade, requiring a smaller percentage of M&O to be subsidized. While Amtrak openly provides its cost versus revenue analyses and projections, we have yet to see such projections and analyses from TNEM and BWRR to justify their revenue statements. One of the primary analyses as part of the \$27 million federal grant to study the feasibility of the system (a requirement for any business) is to determine if sufficient revenues can be generated to cover the M&O costs. Since the majority (approximately 80 percent) of the research to produce the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was funded by tax dollars, you as legislators and we as taxpayers have the right to know if the analyses on SCMaglev income and income sources versus costs for building, loan management, maintenance, and operation are financially sound. We all, you as legislators and

² Kelly PhD, Owen. *Ridership Revisited: The Official Ridership Forecast for the Proposed Baltimore-Washington Maglev Is a Factor of Ten Too High*. 2021. <https://www.greenbeltonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/kelley202108.magrider.pdf>

³ Park, Carol. Report from the Center for Business and Economic Competitiveness at the Maryland Public Policy Institute - Lessons from Asia for the Northeast SCMaglev. Originally published in the Daily Record. December 7, 2018. Copy provided attached to this testimony.

⁴ O'Toole, Randal. *Maglev to Destroy Habitat, Climate*. April 6, 2021. <https://www.cato.org/blog/maglev-destroy-habitat-climate>.

we as the impacted public, should have a clear picture of the level of subsidies needed to keep the SCMaglev system financially afloat before we make the decision to approve it being built. It is long past time that this information is made available to you and for our review.

While Amtrak openly provides its cost versus revenue analyses and projections, we have yet to see such projections and analyses from the TNEM and BWRR to justify their revenue statements.

SCMaglev will likely pull ridership from Amtrak, its rival and competitor in the high-speed train arena, which will require Amtrak subsidies to be increased. In effect, taxpayers, most of whom would not be able to afford a ticket to ride the SCMaglev, will be forced to subsidize two competing systems. Such funds will enrich the private SCMaglev investors, negatively impact existing transportation systems, and pull funding from other needed, more critical transportation infrastructure projects.

Let us remember our own prior experience in looking at a maglev system in Maryland. The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) began to devote funding to the development and evaluation of a Maglev system in FY2001. At that time, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) commenced the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) for the project as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The final EIS was never published because 2003 and 2004 state-enacted legislation prohibited the funding of the project as the result of the final report of the Task Force to Evaluate the Development and Construction of a Magnetic Levitation Transportation System. In its final report, issued in 2003, the task force noted:

that, among other challenges, a significant amount of funding would be required to implement a Maglev system in Maryland.

It is very likely the SCMaglev will also require such taxpayer funds, and likely far more funding than the previous legislative advisory task force considered in its prior finding.

And two issues to call your attention to. First, **High-end Earners are Leaving** as reported in *The Daily Record* on August 7, 2023:

“As the number of Americans filing tax returns with earnings over \$200,000 grows, these earnings are coupled with migration trends that are influencing states’ finances, according to a new report from SmartAsset.⁵ High earners are leaving states such as California and New York, instead choosing to move to states such as Florida and Texas.”⁶

⁵ Villanova, Patrick. “Where High Earners Are Moving – 2023 Study.” July 26, 2023. <https://smartasset.com/data-studies/where-high-earners-moving-2023>.

⁶ Kales, Eli. “Report: Maryland among states with highest loss of high-earning residents.” *The Daily Record*. August 7, 2023. <https://thedailyrecord.com/2023/08/07/report-maryland-among-states-with-highest-loss-of-high-earning-residents/>.

“Maryland was the state with the sixth-largest net outflows of high-earning households, trailing California, New York, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Virginia . . . High earners are leaving Washington D.C. The nation’s capital lost a net total of 2,009 high-earning households between 2020 and 2021. As a percentage of all filers, high earners left D.C. at a faster rate than any state.” As reported by WTOP News on September 21, 2023, “High earners left Washington, D.C., costing the District “\$3 billion in taxable personal income.”⁷

Second, another factor further reducing the SCMaglev’s potential ridership pool is **Baltimore City’s continued population decline**. At its peak, Baltimore City had a population of approximately 1.2 million. Just since 2010, when TNEM started talking about building and operating the SCMaglev, Baltimore City’s population has declined by 8.2%, as seen in Table 1.

Year	Population	Year	Population
2010	620,942	2016	616,542
2011	620,493	2017	610,853
2012	623,035	2018	603,241
2013	622,591	2019	594,601
2014	623,833	2020	583,132
2015	622,831	2021	576,498
2016	616,542	2022	569,931

Table 1. Baltimore City’s Population by Year for 2010 through 2022 (estimate as of July 1, 2022)

This fact leads to many questions such as:

- What are the ridership projections considering the impact of the increasing use of teleworking?
- How have the ridership projects changed as a result of agencies and support contractor experiences with maintaining ongoing operations during COVID-19 “lock downs”?
- How much have the ridership projections decreased as a result of the increasing use of telework and the pool of potential riders leaving Baltimore and Washington, D.C.?
- What level of taxpayer subsidy will now be needed to maintain and operate the SCMaglev? What is the projected increase in subsidies?
- What is the projected impact on Amtrak and MARC ridership and their respective subsidy requirements?
- SCMaglev’s funding is reportedly a loan from a Japanese bank; how has COVID-19 loss of potential ridership affected that pledge? With loss of the population pool of potential riders, is Japan as willing to make a \$5 billion loan? If the SCMaglev operation fails, will the United States and we as its taxpayers become accountable for the loan repayments?

(4) **SCMaglev Will Follow Previous World Experiences with Such Systems, Many of Which Have Failed or are Being Maintained with Large Government Subsidies.**

⁷ Cooper, Kyle. “High earners who left DC during pandemic cost city \$3 billion in tax revenue, data reveals.” September 21, 2023. WTOP News. <https://wtop.com/dc/2023/09/high-earners-who-left-dc-during-pandemic-cost-city-3-billion-in-tax-revenue-data-reveals/>.

I again call your attention to a report by Ms. Carol Park, an analyst at the Center for Business and Economic Competitiveness at the Maryland Public Policy Institute entitled: “Lessons from Asia for the Northeast SCMaglev.”⁸ *(A copy is attached for your convenience)*

To quote Ms. Park:

“SCMaglev enthusiasts have been pushing the project despite warnings of significant risks, just like the supporters of the bullet train did in Asia. For instance, the South Korean government built the Seoul-Incheon line despite consistent warnings of inadequate demand. The project was politically, rather than commercially, driven as Korean officials wanted to present a futuristic version of Korea to the international community as part of the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics.”

The line was closed in 2018 because 77 percent of seats continually were unoccupied.

Germany experimented with building a Maglev train. Following several years of development and building, with large and growing annual government subsidies, the lack of ridership, and a horrific crash that killed 70 percent of the passengers and injured the rest, on a system Germany certified as safe, the project was abandoned, the damage to communities and the environment can still be seen today.

For a current example of overpromise and underperformance, look no further than California’s experience with its high-speed rail system, which has become a financial nightmare. With massive overruns, building delays, and homes, businesses, and private properties taken, there is still no working system. The governor finally “pulled the plug” and the initial project, which now has been significantly downsized. However, destruction of farms, vineyards, and personal property has occurred with no value returned to the California community. The severely downsized system is still experiencing massive cost overruns and building delays.

Ms. Park states:

“Supporters of SCMaglev dismiss these concerns. They argue that the success of bullet trains in Japan demonstrate that these hurdles can be overcome. That’s exactly what officials in China, Taiwan and South Korea thought, only to discover that the situation in Japan is unique. Most of Japan’s 128 million inhabitants live in a few densely populated cities. Many of those residents are rich enough to afford expensive train tickets.”

Note: SCMaglev officials have repeatedly stated that ticket prices will be similar to Amtrak’s Acela.

⁸ Park, Carol. “Transportation Lessons from Asia for the Northeast Maglev.” The Maryland Public Policy Institute. December 7, 2018. www.mdpolicy.org/research/detail/lessons-from-asia-for-the-northeast-maglev?fbclid=IwAR2C1sAfojicOFJ7J6jXCqvtGmKADrtVAopQpP7XRZnc38V25p8G5wWp2s4.

“Compared to Japan, the situation is the polar opposite in Baltimore, where many of the residents who depend on public transit are low-income workers. If these residents are to commute between Baltimore and D.C., they would need an option that is affordable and easily accessible from their homes.” The SCMaglev is neither, whereas MARC provides a reliable and cost-effective transportation system, moving well over 8 million passengers (pre-COVID) into and out of Washington, D.C., annually.”

(5) TNEM and BWRR Have Made Many Claims About Jobs and Revenues But Have Yet to Share the Analyses Supporting These Claims.

- The promoters of high-speed and maglev trains promise lots of jobs. In 2017 it was 75,000, now the number is reported to be 200,000 - **These job numbers are misleading or appear flawed.** The underlying analyses, which has been funded by a federal grant of public tax dollars, needs to be made available for public review.
- Since 2017, we have asked to see the basis of this claim, the work breakdown projections, and information to substantiate their statements - **We have not seen anything to substantiate BWRR's jobs projection.**
- Jobs created to build the SCMaglev will be short term. Once the system is built between Baltimore and Washington, D.C., the construction jobs in Maryland will end. These jobs will then move north if BWRR gains approval to extend the system to New York and Boston - **Maryland will lose these jobs, and likely many of the laborers, and the related tax revenues as the construction moves to Pennsylvania and New York. In addition, there will be an increase in unemployed support costs until the displaced workers who stay in Maryland find work.**
- If the operation of Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, Patuxent Research Refuge, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Optics Centers are curtailed or shut down, the career, high-paying jobs will be lost from Anne Arundel and Prince George's Counties and the state of Maryland – **The long-term net effect is that Maryland will lose many career, high-paying jobs and their related tax revenue.**
- Many high-speed and maglev train projects across the world have cost far more than promised by the promoters. In some cases (e.g., California's high-speed train fiasco), there has been an increase of many times the original projected cost (to date and growing), requiring increasing amounts of government (i.e., tax dollar) subsidies. - **When the cost is far more than projected, larger tax-dollar subsidies are required and forced on governments.**
- As high-speed and maglev train projects across the world experienced building delays - **Many have experienced protracted schedule overruns and far longer periods of disruption to impacted communities.**
- Coupled with the 2025 tight budget funding, the tax dollars needed for moving forward with equitable, high-priority transportation infrastructure projects will likely be further downsized or cancelled if funds are used to subsidize the building and operation of the SCMaglev. After the SCMaglev is built, the construction jobs are finished, subsidies will likely be needed to maintain the operation of the system. These tax dollars should be used to expand and enhance public transportation systems, as well as to maintain, repair, or enhance existing bridges, roads, and tunnels used by the vast majority of drivers and riders

to commute and travel, and as used by commerce (e.g., trucking and delivery) vehicles, which is the financial lifeblood of Maryland - **Tax dollars are better spent to help all residents, not the wealthy SCMaglev system owners and their “well heeled” riders.**

- The SCMaglev will take ridership from Amtrak and Acela, requiring increased subsidies to maintain the existing East Coast rail system – **If built, tax dollars will be used to subsidize two competing train systems.**
- BWRR states large numbers of vehicles will be taken off the road – **Where is the analysis to support this claim?** The SCMaglev DEIS⁹ refutes this statement in multiple places¹⁰, and with the annual growth of traffic in Maryland, whatever savings BWRR states will be made would likely be overcome by the annual pre- and now post-COVID-19 vehicle usage growth. Again, SCMaglev ridership will likely come from Acela or air flights, not cars commuting to and from Washington, D.C.
- COVID-19 has created a significant wrinkle for BWRR’s SCMaglev project and all mass transit ridership projections and revenues. Many agencies and support businesses have proven their knowledge workers can work remotely. The cost of office space in Washington, D.C. is very high, and agencies and businesses are already looking at downsizing their office footprint and invest the rent savings back into mission-related work – **How does the massive growth in remote working impact BWRR’s claims? Where is/are the analysis(es)? As the current Administration is ordering more federal employees back to work in their respective offices/agencies, how would SCMaglev help move ridership to and from Washington, D.C, with one stop in Baltimore City, one stop at BWI Marshal International Airport, and one stop in Washington, D.C.?**
- As stated before, it is unlikely that greenhouse gases and road congestion will be reduced by the SCMaglev. The operation of SCMaglev maintenance vehicles would add to the existing traffic congestion - **SCMaglev will unlikely reduce greenhouse gases and more likely create an increase in road congestion.**
- Our tax dollars should be used for the infrastructure we all rely on and need. The construction jobs generated will be long-term, as there are miles and miles of roads, bridges, and tunnels needing maintenance, repair, and enhancement. In addition, with the continued improvement and expansion of MARC. Note: MARC provides a low-cost transportation option to a far greater number of Marylanders than the SCMaglev will ever provide - **The long-term net effect is more long-term construction jobs will be available in Maryland rebuilding and enhancing MARC and the whole of our transportation infrastructure.**

(6) The Need for Other Far More High-Value Transportation Infrastructure Improvements Outweigh Wasting Funds on Building the SCMaglev.

Supporters of the SCMaglev state the existing 150-year-old rail system is out of date and employs obsolete technology. I rode MARC and Amtrak into Washington, D.C. for nearly 30 years. Not once was I on a train that employed a wood-fired steam engine. Amtrak and MARC employ modern equipment, that is running on an upgraded high-speed rail system. Both are

⁹ DEIS – SCMagLev Draft Environmental Impact Statement

¹⁰ See “SCMagLev DEIS Comments, Concerns, and Questions” section XXIX “Unsubstantiated Claims” pages 91 to 116, and 141 to 149. May 20, 2021. https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_12074e36746044e08fccd7a57f081409.pdf.

purchasing and implementing new, proven, state-of-the-art equipment.

Amtrak and the FRA completed an expensive multi-year EIS and review of Amtrak's Northeast Corridor Future (NEC) plan (2017).¹¹ One of the key findings in this report was that a new alignment was too expensive and not needed when the planned upgrades and rebuilding of the existing system was considered. With the FRA's approval of the *NEC Future* plan, Amtrak secured loans totaling \$2.7 billion, and is actively engaged in upgrading rail, equipment, and stations all along the Northeast Corridor.

Note: Maryland's own BWI Rail Station has been replaced with a larger, modern, and improved comfort building with upgrade technology at a cost of \$4.7 million.

Amtrak has built the next generation of train equipment capable of speeds in the 200 miles-per-hour range. Having past FRA evaluations, Amtrak is testing the new train technology on the Northeast corridor, with the plan to bring this new technology online for customers this year. The train is being designed and built in the United States, by American unions and trades, not imported from overseas as the SCMaglev and its supporting systems. More information on Amtrak's NEC Future and the status of the second-generation Acela are readily available on the Internet.

In a recent test, an existing MARC passenger train, running on existing track, and managed by existing control systems, travelled from Baltimore Penn Station (located in the heart of Baltimore City), stopped at the BWI Rail Station, and continued onto Washington, D.C.'s Union Station completing the run in 30 minutes. BWRR claims their SCMaglev can complete the run in 15-minutes, starting from the proposed Cherry Hill station (located on the far southern end of Baltimore City). The MARC ticket cost is \$10. The various stated SCMaglev ticket cost is \$25 to \$80 - a range between twice to eight times the cost to ride the MARC train, all to save a theoretical 15-minutes of travel. As noted in Carl Park's article, the demographics of Baltimore City residents cannot afford to ride the SCMaglev on a regular basis. The MARC service is far more accessible and affordable.

Instead of wasting money to build a transportation system that will not serve Marylanders and take funds needed for transportation infrastructure, I, MCRT, CATS, and a long and growing list of community, civic, environmental organizations, cities and counties, as well as federal agencies, believe it would be far better to invest those funds into MARC and the current Maryland transportation infrastructure.

For example, look around the room you are in. Everything you see — the structure, paint, electrical systems, electronics, furniture, and clothes and shoes you are wearing — the raw materials to the finished products were transported by commercial truck. Maryland's commerce and economic well-being requires a sound transportation infrastructure to operate efficiently. Such systems draw business to Maryland and improve the economic and tax revenue base of

¹¹ U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Railroad Administration. NEC Future: A Rail Investment Plan for the Northeast Corridor. Record of Decision. July 2017.
<https://www.fra.dot.gov/necfuture/pdfs/rod/rod.pdf>.

our state. How many Maryland bridges are rated “C” or lower and need to be repaired or replaced? Such work would be a far better use of Maryland’s and, for that matter, federal tax dollars, than investing in and subsidizing an unnecessary high-cost train for the elite, “well-heeled” rider.

AND . . .

In this written testimony, we have not addressed security concerns associated with having a 300-plus mile-an-hour train flying down a guideway 150-feet in the air, or through a tunnel. What catastrophic results would occur if someone is able to access the track and executes an attack? Who is going to maintain the security envelope, what is the cost of these resources, and what will the state, cities and counties will be required (forced) to provide? All of this would take additional tax dollars, again dollars better used elsewhere.

I agree with the *Lessons from Asia for the Northeast SCMaglev* report recommendation:

“The Northeast Maglev project should be scrapped before it is too late.
There are many transportation priorities that are worthier of attention.”

There are two additional concerns to which I draw your attention:

- (1) If built, the SCMaglev will potentially release toxins, carcinogens, and radon gas into our communities.
- (2) If built, the SCMaglev will expose our school structures, personnel, and students to constant low-level vibration and oscillating magnetic fields as the train is running under them.

Concerns Explained:

- (1) If built, the SCMaglev will potentially release toxins, carcinogens, and radon gas into our communities.

As described during the BWRR-Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) Open House (October 16, 2017) by the Louis Berger professional engineer, the ventilation facilities’ primary purpose is to clear smoke in case there is a fire in the tunnel. Located every 3 to 4 miles apart along the underground tunneled route, the ventilation units will force air into the tunnel on the side of the section filled with smoke as the next ventilation facility exhausts air from the tunnel. In other words, one ventilation facility will pressurize the tunnel ahead of the section with smoke while the alternate ventilation facility will depressurize the tunnel to exhaust the smoke into the atmosphere.

Our concern is that the source of a fire will likely be electrical. Such a fire consumes electrical insulation and lubricants. As identified in a Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) study, when burned, these fuel sources produce both toxic and carcinogen compounds¹² that,

¹² As noted in an MIT study referenced in “SCMagLev DEIS Comments, Concerns, and Questions” section LI “The Building and Operation of the SCMagLev Will Have Significant and Potentially Health Harming Impacts on Human and Wildlife and Property” pages 122 to 131. May 20, 2021. <https://aa247ef8-bd4a->

according to the planned use of the ventilation system described, will exhaust these dangerous compounds into the atmosphere, exposing the surrounding communities to these unhealthy chemical compounds. Such carcinogen exposure can potentially create damaging respiratory effects, possibly leading to life-threatening scenarios for the residents and wildlife as they inhale these hazardous compounds being released into the atmosphere.

Our question: What short-, mid-, and long-term health effects will this have on the affected community? If nothing else, it will have a negative effect on property values and their related property tax revenue. Who wants to raise their family next to a facility that may release poison into the atmosphere at any time?

As you may know, Anne Arundel and Prince George's Counties have naturally occurring radon gas. Radon gas is a known carcinogen, which is why homes and other buildings are tested across both counties. Infiltrating from the ground, this colorless and odorless gas finds its way into building basements through cracks and seams between the basement walls and concrete floor.

During the discussion with the professional engineer from Louis Berger hired to design the building of the SCMaglev, we asked about water infiltration, drainage, and pumped water removal, as the tunneling under Linthicum will likely intersect the aquifer. Also, there is the question about monitoring and venting naturally occurring gases that leak into the tunnel through the same openings through which ground water enters, as the tunnel will serve as a large collecting system for ground leaching gases as it transits Anne Arundel County and the southern section of Prince George's County 80 to 150 feet below the surface. When these ventilation facilities exhaust into the atmosphere, anyone near these facilities will also be exposed to any radon gas collected in the tunnel. As with all radioactive materials, the intensity and length of time of exposure determines the severity of the side effects. Therefore, any low-level exposure, whether to radiation over a short or a long period, will likely have negative effects on human and wildlife resulting in health issues. Further, like long-term exposure to low-level radiation, long-term exposure to low levels of electromagnetic radiation may also have cumulative health effects on the human and wildlife. The electromagnetic radiation generated by the SCMaglev needs to be evaluated and publicly reported well before any building authorization is approved.

Our question: What long-term cumulative health effects will radon gas and electromagnetic radiation exposure have on the affected community as radioactive radon gas is vented into the atmosphere through the ventilation facilities?

4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_12074e36746044e08fccd7a57f081409.pdf.

- (2) If built, the SCMaglev will expose our school structures, personnel, and students to constant low-level vibration and oscillating magnetic fields as the train running under them.

As the train passes underground near and or below our schools, homes, and businesses, what effect will the resulting vibration have on the structures? Masonry structures do not fare well with constant exposure to vibration. Given that most of our homes and businesses are built on concrete foundations and masonry walls, continuous exposure to even low-level vibrations will likely have a cumulative effect, which will include cracking followed by water penetration, negatively impacting the structural integrity of the building. Such cracks allow groundwater and rainwater runoff to enter basements. Besides damp and wet basements, mold growth becomes another potential human health issue.

Our questions: What are the long-term health impacts of exposure to low-level oscillating electromagnetic fields and vibrations as the SCMaglev transit passes under our homes, businesses, and schools and their playgrounds?

In Summary:

I, MCRT and CATS have provided a list of reasons why the SCMaglev should be stopped now before Maryland is forced into a position where it has no choice but to make use of our needed tax dollars to directly or indirectly fund the SCMaglev building, maintenance, operation, and security. Our tax dollars are far better spent to replace, repair, and enhance MARC and our existing transportation infrastructure.

And my concluding question:

Are you willing to expose our families and children to find out what will be the long-term health effects?

Again, thank you for this opportunity to provide this written testimony before you on the many reasons to oppose building and operating the SCMaglev.

Attachment 1: “Lessons from Asia for the Northeast SCMaglev”
(Copy attached – see pages 15-16).

Short Informational MCRT-CATS Position Papers and their links:

- (1) CATS-MCRT Rpt - SCMagLev Biological Impact – 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_efecc0b083614963a73f1b04cebe4cec.pdf
- (2) CATS-MCRT Rpt - SCMagLev Biological Impact (Part 2) - 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_54c8689b28194a99afcd5e4b404efebe.pdf
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- (3) CATS-MCRT Rpt - Amtrak the Better Alternative – 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_62a178a0ce394b6b887b1c4e4f3c44f4.pdf
- (4) CATS-MCRT Rpt - The Next Generation of Acela – 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_60c28f6fdad84512802de36f7a79e54d.pdf
- (5) CATS-MCRT Rpt - What Impact Would the Have on Our Communities?– 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_f767cb0eb0724bfb8341cd86df2ab1a4.pdf
- (6) CATS-MCRT Rpt - Is the SCMagLev Safe? – 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_47f2ce2871e24664b8f100db013793ad.pdf
- (7) CATS-MCRT Rpt - Is the SCMagLev Safe? (Part 2) – 20210111 https://aa247ef8-bd4a-4dd2-890c-8b5ebdf396e2.filesusr.com/ugd/6d0640_6181d1a331f94219969c286bc0efec33.pdf
- (8) Kelly PhD, Owen. Ridership Revisted: The Official Ridership Forecast for the Proposed Baltimore-Washington Maglev Is a Factor of Ten Too High. 2021. <https://www.greenbeltonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/kelley202108.magrider.pdf>
- (9) O'Toole, Randal. Maglev to Destroy Habitat, Climate. April 6, 2021. <https://www.cato.org/blog/maglev-destroy-habitat-climate>.

Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit (MCRT) evaluates transit projects for social equity, environmental justice, economic viability, and community accessibility. We believe that the Baltimore Washington (BW) SCMaglev must be stopped in order to implement future transit projects that meet our criteria of a much lower price and much less risk and impact to communities. Thus, we support the no-build option and are working to stop this project through the National Environmental Policy Act process. For more information about MCRT see our website at: www.mcrt-action.org.

Citizens Against the SCMaglev (CATS) is a confederation of scientists, engineers, experts, community organizations and citizens in support of transportation infrastructure improvements that benefit our communities, state, and nation. CATS opposes the construction of an expensive transportation system serving a small minority of the wealthy at the cost of taxpayer funds far better used to maintain and improve the transportation infrastructure needed and used daily by all citizens, businesses, and commerce. For up-to-date information on the SCMaglev opposition, see our Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/groups/CitizensAgainstSCMaglev.

Report from the Center for Business and Economic Competitiveness at the Maryland Public Policy Institute

Lessons from Asia for the Northeast SCMaglev

Originally published in the *Daily Record*.

December 7, 2018

In China, a bullet train crash in the city of Wenzhou in 2011 killed 40 people. The crash was blamed on poor design and mismanagement. In Taiwan, the bullet train system rang up \$1.5 billion in losses over seven years, requiring a \$1 billion government bailout to date. In South Korea, a high-speed rail line connecting Seoul to Incheon closed in 2018 after just four years of service because 77 percent of seats were unoccupied.

Across the Pacific Ocean, supporters of “SCMaglev” in the United States are gearing up to create an American version of the Asian rail disasters. The Northeast Maglev is a proposed magnetic levitation train that would travel at 311 miles per hour, carrying passengers between Baltimore City and Washington, D.C. in 15 minutes. The Maglev team hopes to start construction on the ostensibly private project in 2020.

SCMaglev enthusiasts have been pushing the project despite warnings of significant risks, just like the supporters of the bullet train did in Asia. For instance, the South Korean government built the Seoul-Incheon line despite consistent warnings of inadequate demand. The project was politically, rather than commercially, driven: Korean officials wanted to present a futuristic version of Korea to the international community as part of the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympics.

SCMaglev supporters in Maryland have similar non-business motives for backing the project. Baltimore has been experiencing a steady population decline over the years, and many supporters believe that connecting the city to economically vibrant D.C. could reverse that trend. This vision has blinded the advocates to serious concerns about the project.

First, though the project purports to be a private effort, high-speed train projects are generally magnets of questionable government subsidies. “We can’t build our infrastructure 100 percent privately,” said Wayne Rogers, the CEO of Northeast Maglev. Building the SCMaglev line from Baltimore to D.C. is estimated to cost between \$12 billion to \$15 billion (Others believe the cost will be far more). So far only \$5 billion in private investment has been secured for the project, so taxpayers will be on the hook to finance the rest of the project, likely taking funds needed for other far more valuable national infrastructure projects.

Second, it’s highly doubtful the SCMaglev will attract sufficient ridership to make it economically viable. According to SCMaglev officials, the service would target the “elite business travelers” and charge higher prices than Amtrak, which already provides regular rail service between the two cities, and is in the process of upgrading their infrastructure, equipment and stations to support faster trains on existing right-of-ways. Just as with the Seoul-Incheon line, there are also numerous bus companies that provide affordable trips along the Baltimore-D.C. route.

Finally, building the Northeast Maglev will inevitably disrupt the communities along the line because of noise and electromagnetic fields, destruction of homes and businesses during the building of the elevated portions of the line, as well as destruction of remaining green space between Baltimore and D.C., and the negative environmental impacts of tunneling, not to mention the hurtling trains. As the planned SCMaglev will only make three stops, the affected residents are unlikely to experience any commercial or economic development in their neighborhood. In short, residents along the route will pay the high price and receive little to no benefit from the SCMaglev.

Supporters of SCMaglev dismiss these concerns. They argue that the success of bullet trains in Japan demonstrate that these hurdles can be overcome. That's exactly what officials in China, Taiwan and South Korea thought, only to discover that the situation in Japan is unique. Most of Japan's 128 million inhabitants live in a few densely populated cities. Many of those residents are rich enough to afford expensive train tickets.

Compared to Japan, the situation is the polar opposite in Baltimore, where many of the residents who depend on public transit are low-income workers. If these residents are to commute between Baltimore and D.C., they would need an option that is affordable and easily accessible from their homes. The SCMaglev is neither. MARC provides that reliable and cost-effective transportation system, that last year moved over 8 million passengers into and out of D.C.

The Northeast Maglev project should be scrapped before it is too late. There are many transportation priorities that are worthier of attention.

In early 2018, Baltimore's Metro subway line closed for a month. According to the American Public Transportation Association, the closure was due to the Maryland Transit Administration's lack of expertise and poor communication. Meanwhile, the D.C. Metro system is a never-ending series of service disruptions, crumbling infrastructure and safety failures.

If Maryland wants to improve its transportation system, it should focus on ensuring that its existing projects are safe and managed properly. Whether this is done by restructuring the MTA or by privatizing some of its operations to incentivize better performance, it will not take billions of dollars to ensure that Maryland residents have reliable public transportation.

According to SCMagLev's Chair, Wayne Rogers, "Infrastructure is fundamentally a government responsibility, which has failed." He is right. Many governments across the ocean have failed by partnering with private companies to build trains that turned out to be costly, dangerous, and increasingly reliant on government support. We can avoid recreating the same high-speed catastrophe in North America by abandoning the Northeast Maglev now.

The author of the original article is Carol Park, a senior policy analyst in the Center for Business and Economic Competitiveness at the Maryland Public Policy Institute. She can be reached at cpark@mdpolicy.org.

Source: Park, Carol. "Transportation Lessons from Asia for the Northeast Maglev." December 7, 2018. The Maryland Public Policy Institute. www.mdpolicy.org/research/detail/lessons-from-asia-for-the-northeast-maglev?fbclid=IwAR2C1sAfojicOFJ7J6jXCqvtGmKADrtVAopQpP7XRZnc38V25p8G5wWp2s4.

Testimony Against MAGLEV Funding, 2025, v2.pdf

Uploaded by: Darrell Carrington

Position: FAV



GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL

Emmett V. Jordan, *Mayor*
Kristen L.K. Weaver, *Mayor Pro Tem*
Amy Knesel
Danielle McKinney
Jenni Pompei
Silke I. Pope
Rodney M. Roberts

Senate Bill 0055 – Prohibited Appropriations - MAGLEV Transportation System SUPPORT

Maryland Senate and House Members:

On behalf of the City of Greenbelt, I offer this written testimony in support of SB0055.

The proposed SCMAGLEV project has raised significant concerns, particularly around the prudent use of Maryland's state resources which could otherwise improve existing transportation services. Transparency issues regarding the project's financial sustainability, erroneous environmental impact statements, and potential environmental degradation have been documented. Additionally, the project's energy inefficiency and unlikely congestion relief are at odds with Maryland's current budget shortfall of approximately \$2.7B which will impact essential public services. Overall, the project's purported benefits are overshadowed by its financial and ecological implications. More specifically:

1) Maryland Department of Transportation \$1.3B Deficit. This year the Maryland Department of Transportation is dealing with a \$1.3B budget shortfall. To solve this shortfall, the Department will cut roughly \$1 billion from its operating budget. Another \$2 billion will be cut from its capital budget and 8% cut from the budget for highway, transit, ports and airports agencies, along with the Motor Vehicle Administration. Local governments will see a \$400 million reduction - monies that are critical to local government providing safe roads and sidewalks for our residents and visitors. And while we recognize that the MAGLEV funding may be a few years off, the Transportation Secretary is quoted as saying "This is not a new problem for our state." The state cannot afford to provide public funding for what has been touted as a private venture, to the detriment of state operations, road/infrastructure and critical local support.

2) State Resources Would Better Support Existing Rail Service. Any state resources that could be potentially allocated to support the MAGLEV project would be far better spent on sustaining and improving existing rail and local transit services. These services include High-speed Amtrak service, the MTA, MARC trains, and WMATA (metro) providing far greater benefits to Marylanders in terms of access and affordability. Much of the access and benefits not proposed

to be supported by the MAGLEV project. Substantial public investments to sustain and improve these services will be required in the coming years. Funding for these services; funding for bicycle & pedestrian connections, and ways to move commuters to our transit hubs are the best place to put taxpayer resources.

3) Incomplete Information and Transparency on Public Information. The information presented to the public about the MAGLEV so far does not show operating and maintenance costs offsetting revenues. There are a number of significant unanswered questions remaining regarding the financial viability of the project. Further, while the project was touted as a private venture where no public funds were to be requested, it appears that public funding will be sought after. We feel that if the project is financially viable, then it should be supported operating revenues and private investment, not needing public monies.

4) The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Flawed. The Federal Railroad Administration released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project in 2021. The City performed a thorough review of the project that uncovered a significant number of errors and omissions. An example of one such error is the project's ridership estimates and related projections (including travel time savings, induced travel, and reliability benefits) are grossly over-inflated, leading to further inflation of estimated congestion relief and projected revenues.

5) Anticipated Damage to the Environment and Natural Ecosystem. The MAGLEV project would also destroy sensitive environmental resources and habitats. Including impacting rare, threatened and endangered species and eliminating vast swaths of tree canopy that are treasured by Marylanders. The project could impact nearly 89 acres of wetlands and up to 30 acres of Maryland Nontidal Wetlands of Special State Concern (NTWSSC). These wetlands have exceptional ecological or educational value of statewide significance. The impacts to the NTWSSC located in the Greenbelt Forest Preserve along Goddard Branch are of particular concern to Greenbelt.

6) The Project Will Not Relieve Congestion. Norman Marshall, President and founder of Smart Mobility, Inc., who assisted Greenbelt with its review, stated, "The supposed congestion relief for non-SCMAGLEV travelers will not materialize. Instead, construction of the SCMAGLEV will create a two-tier system with a fast ride for the affluent and negative consequences for everyone else." The DEIS overestimates travel time savings and reliability benefits by a factor of five or more. Three-quarters of the purported economic benefits of SCMAGLEV are travel time and reliability benefits and these are overestimated by a factor of 15 or more. The other significant economic benefits calculations in the DEIS rest both on inflated ridership and on unreliable vehicle miles traveled (VMT) multipliers.

7) The Project Is Not "Green" and Energy Friendly. The project is not "green" nor energy efficient as suggested. It will increase energy consumption by the equivalent of approximately 88,900 homes per year during operations. It is unclear if the regional transmission organization will be able to meet this increased need or what the impacts on reliability and consumer prices may be. This energy demand concern is exacerbated by the fast growth in EV charging needs throughout the state putting additional demands on the electric grid. However, the use of EVs

by our residents has a much greater impact on improving environmental quality and the quality of life of our resident and City.

In summary, State resources that could potentially be allocated to the MAGLEV project in the future would be better spent on improving existing rail and local transit services, providing support to Maryland roads and infrastructure and supporting local governments and the services that residents depend on. Maryland taxpayer resources should not be appropriated for a MAGLEV System that undermines the natural resources so many Marylanders are fighting trying to preserve.

On behalf of the City of Greenbelt, we urge you to support SB0055

If you would like additional information and/or have any questions, please do not hesitate to me at ejordan@greenbeltmd.gov or contact Josué Salmerón, MBA, PMP, City Manager, at Direct: 240-542-2024 Cell: 240-941-9495 Email: jsalmeron@greenbeltmd.gov.

On behalf of the Greenbelt City Council, I respectfully submit this testimony. Thank you for your attention.



Emmett V. Jordan
Mayor – City of Greenbelt
25 Crescent Road.
Greenbelt, MD 20770

Testimony Against MAGLEV Funding, 2025, v2.pdf

Uploaded by: Darrell Carrington

Position: FAV



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1) Maryland Department of Transportation \$1.3B Deficit. This year the Maryland Department of Transportation is dealing with a \$1.3B budget shortfall. To solve this shortfall, the Department will cut roughly \$1 billion from its operating budget. Another \$2 billion will be cut from its capital budget and 8% cut from the budget for highway, transit, ports and airports agencies, along with the Motor Vehicle Administration. Local governments will see a \$400 million reduction - monies that are critical to local government providing safe roads and sidewalks for our residents and visitors. And while we recognize that the MAGLEV funding may be a few years off, the Transportation Secretary is quoted as saying "This is not a new problem for our state." The state cannot afford to provide public funding for what has been touted as a private venture, to the detriment of state operations, road/infrastructure and critical local support.

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to be supported by the MAGLEV project. Substantial public investments to sustain and improve these services will be required in the coming years. Funding for these services; funding for bicycle & pedestrian connections, and ways to move commuters to our transit hubs are the best place to put taxpayer resources.

3) Incomplete Information and Transparency on Public Information. The information presented to the public about the MAGLEV so far does not show operating and maintenance costs offsetting revenues. There are a number of significant unanswered questions remaining regarding the financial viability of the project. Further, while the project was touted as a private venture where no public funds were to be requested, it appears that public funding will be sought after. We feel that if the project is financially viable, then it should be supported operating revenues and private investment, not needing public monies.

4) The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Flawed. The Federal Railroad Administration released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project in 2021. The City performed a thorough review of the project that uncovered a significant number of errors and omissions. An example of one such error is the project's ridership estimates and related projections (including travel time savings, induced travel, and reliability benefits) are grossly over-inflated, leading to further inflation of estimated congestion relief and projected revenues.

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In summary, State resources that could potentially be allocated to the MAGLEV project in the future would be better spent on improving existing rail and local transit services, providing support to Maryland roads and infrastructure and supporting local governments and the services that residents depend on. Maryland taxpayer resources should not be appropriated for a MAGLEV System that undermines the natural resources so many Marylanders are fighting trying to preserve.

On behalf of the City of Greenbelt, we urge you to support SB0055

If you would like additional information and/or have any questions, please do not hesitate to me at ejordan@greenbeltmd.gov or contact Josué Salmerón, MBA, PMP, City Manager, at Direct: 240-542-2024 Cell: 240-941-9495 Email: jsalmeron@greenbeltmd.gov.

On behalf of the Greenbelt City Council, I respectfully submit this testimony. Thank you for your attention.



Emmett V. Jordan
Mayor – City of Greenbelt
25 Crescent Road.
Greenbelt, MD 20770

Knee_maglev.pdf

Uploaded by: Karen Knee

Position: FAV

Date: 1/27/25

Subject: Written Testimony in Favor of **SB0055** – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System (Cross-file **HB0400**)

To: Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

Description of Bill:

Senate Bill SB0055 would prohibit Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) from appropriating funds from the state of Maryland to build the proposed SCMaglev transportation system, “providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries” of state employees. This exception is in response to Northeast Maglev’s concerns that earlier versions of this bill had unintended consequences in that it would inadvertently tie their hands to work with the appropriate state personnel to acquire permits or other required approvals should the project go forward. By including this provision, the bill should be acceptable to BWRR and the Northeast Maglev.

My name is Karen Knee. I am writing in support of SB0055, sponsored by Senators A. Washington, Augustine, and Beidle.

BWRR continues to seek federal funding for their project (SCMaglev). BWRR has repeatedly stated that they do not need state funds. And yet they argue that they want state funds to be available *just in case* financial support is needed “later” in the project’s implementation. Given that federal funding is less available, the state needs to protect its dwindling funds from being directed toward this boondoggle of a project. The state needs to protect transportation dollars for projects that will actually improve transit opportunities in Maryland. The most this project will do is it will go through money and not produce anything useful. The projected costs will increase unceasingly, and the project is likely to never be completed.

My concern is that if this project were to ever “begin” it will run out of funding over and over again, will be over budget continuously, will continuously ask the state for untenable amounts of funding, and the result will be that our financial resources and precious land will be seriously compromised for an unneeded project that will never be completed. And our land – our precious natural resource – will be forever damaged – for ABSOLUTELY NO BENEFIT TO ANYONE.

Further, BWRR has not, thus far, been able to demonstrate to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) that the construction of this project will meet MDE's requirements for protecting our waterways – also a precious natural resource.

Much is on the line in this bill. Maryland's financial resources, our natural resources of land and water, and the integrity of our communities.

I ask that SB0055 be given a favorable vote and moved out of committee.

Sincerely,

Karen L. Knee

Address: 20 Hillside Rd., Unit M. Greenbelt, MD 20770

Tel: 202-250-0873

SB0055 Maglev 2025.pdf

Uploaded by: Kathleen Bartolomeo

Position: FAV

My name is Kathy Bartolomeo, and I am writing in support of SB0055, sponsored by Senators A. Washington, Augustine, and Beidle.

The state's transportation funding is facing limitations and funding needs to be allocated toward urgent and practical projects – those that will benefit Maryland citizens – the taxpayers who pay for these projects. The transportation needs of the state and its residents are for effective, affordable, and accessible commuter options – not an overpriced, limited access, train for the wealthy.

BWRR and Northeast Maglev have stated they want to be able to access state funding “if” they need financial funding later in their project. Two points: 1) projects of this size always have cost overruns, and 2) they are currently facing loss of federal funding. These two points will lead BWRR and Northeast Maglev to be knocking on the proverbial “door” of the state Comptroller on a regular basis if this legislation is not passed.

BWRR is currently seeking funding from the infrastructure investment and Jobs Act funds and possibly other grant sources at the federal level. If provided they would use taxpayers' dollars for a project that will serve the wealthy. Their federal funding has been fully expended at this point. State funds should serve the greater good of Maryland residents.

My concern is that if this project were to ever “begin” it will run out of funding repeatedly, will be over budget continuously, will continuously ask the state for untenable amounts of funding, and the result will be that our financial resources and precious land will be seriously compromised for an unneeded project that will never be completed. And our land – a precious natural resource – will be forever damaged – for ABSOLUTELY NO BENEFIT TO ANYONE.

Currently the NEPA process has been paused on this project. Significant work needs to be done to move this project to the next level. But the federal funding to allow this is not in place.

BWRR will need investors. Indeed, the Japanese government has offered to invest in the project. This puts Maryland at risk of having the Japanese government demanding funds for this project. It would be very important to have legislation to impede this.

In addition, BWRR has not, thus far, been able to demonstrate to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) that the construction of this project will meet MDE's requirements for protecting our waterways – also a precious natural resource.

Much is on the line in this bill. Maryland's financial resources, our natural resources of land and water, and the integrity of our communities.

Based on recent research, the construction of the SCMaglev will generate more greenhouse gases than it will save for likely several decades. We do not have decades to wait for such a "possibility". In addition, the project will destroy hundreds of acres of wild green spaces including a forest preserve, wetlands and wildlife refuge all of which are needed for CO2 storage, clean air and water, and climate cooling.

Protecting the state from losing funding for needed transportation and infrastructure projects throughout the state is the best option.

I ask that SB0055 be given a favorable vote and moved out of committee.

Sincerely,
Kathy Bartolomeo
15 Laurel Hill Rd.
Greenbelt, Md. 20770
301-928-4326

SB 0055 testimony .pdf

Uploaded by: Laura Bonkosky

Position: FAV

Date:January 27, 2025

Subject: Written Testimony in Favor of **SB0055** – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System (Cross-file **HB0400**)

To: Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

Description of Bill:

Senate Bill SB0055 would prohibit Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) from appropriating funds from the state of Maryland to build the proposed SCMaglev transportation system, “providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries” of state employees. This exception is in response to Northeast Maglev’s concerns that earlier versions of this bill had unintended consequences in that it would inadvertently tie their hands to work with the appropriate state personnel to acquire permits or other required approvals should the project go forward. By including this provision, the bill should be acceptable to BWRR and the Northeast Maglev.

My name is Laura Bonkosky. I am writing in support of SB0055, sponsored by Senators A. Washington, Augustine, and Beidle

TESTIMONY: My concern is that Maryland is facing budget constraints, and any funding earmarked for transit should be spent on a project that has a greater public benefit and is affordable to the average Marylander, and has a minimal environmental impact. The Maglev meets neither of these criteria.

I ask that SB0055 be given a favorable vote and moved out of committee.
Sincerely,

Name Laura Bonkosky
Address: 19 Ridge Rd, Unit T, Greenbelt, MD 20770
Tel: 301-908-6899

MAGLEV 1.pdf

Uploaded by: Laurie Hortie

Position: FAV

Date: January 27, 2025

Subject: Written Testimony in Favor of SB0055 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations –Magnetic Levitation Transportation System (Cross-file HB0400)

To: Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee

Description of Bill:

Senate Bill SB0055 would prohibit Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) from appropriating funds from the state of Maryland to build the proposed SCMaglev transportation system, “providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries” of state employees. This exception is in response to Northeast Maglev’s concerns that earlier versions of this bill had unintended consequences in that it would inadvertently tie their hands to work with the appropriate state personnel to acquire permits or other required approvals should the project go forward. By including this provision, the bill should be acceptable to BWRR and the Northeast Maglev.

My name is Laurie A. Hortie and I am writing in **support of SB0055**, sponsored by Senators A. Washington, Augustine, and Beidle.

Here is my written testimony:

The state’s transportation funding is facing limitations and funding needs to be allocated toward urgent and practical projects – those that will benefit Maryland citizens – the taxpayers who pay for these projects. The transportation needs of the state and its residents are for effective, affordable, and accessible commuter options – not an overpriced, limited access, train for the wealthy. As a retired Maryland public school teacher of 32 years I have seen firsthand how the lack of accessible commuter options affect all residents, but most especially impacts our poorest students and their families. This is true across the state.

There is much on the line in this bill: Maryland’s financial resources, our natural resources of land and water, and the integrity of our communities. The State needs to prepare for the changing scenarios the Climate Crisis is creating for how we live, work and travel. A lifelong resident of Maryland, I have seen with my own eyes how Maryland’s climate has been impacted by Climate Change. We must act by carefully attending to the footprint of projects that the state funds.

Based on recent research, the construction of the SCMaglev will generate more greenhouse gases than it will save for several decades. We do not have decades to wait for such a “possibility”. In addition, the project will destroy hundreds of acres of wild green spaces including a forest preserve, wetlands and wildlife refuge all of which are needed for CO2 storage, clean air and water, and climate cooling.

Our planet needs protecting so that future generations may thrive and flourish. Maryland's future generations will thank you.

I ask that SB0055 be given a favorable vote and moved out of committee.

Sincerely,

Laurie A. Hortie
51 Ridge Rd. Unit H
Greenbelt, MD 20770
202-251-0992

Written Testimony SB 55- State Finance - Prohibite

Uploaded by: Matthew Girardi

Position: FAV



Statement of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 689

SB 55– State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System
January 27th, 2025

TO: The Honorable Guy Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee
FROM: Matthew Girardi, Political & Communications Director, ATU Local 689

ATU Local 689 supports SB 55 and urges the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee to issue a favorable report. This bill is a commonsense measure ensuring that Maryland does not waste money on unreal and unviable transportation options.

At Local 689, we represent over 15,000 transit workers and retirees throughout the Washington DC Metro Area performing many skilled transportation crafts for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), MetroAccess, Fairfax Connector, and DASH among others. Our union helped turn low-wage, exploitative transit jobs into transit careers. We became an engine for the middle-class of this region.

I will note that our Union is over a century old and has worked with changing technologies that moved the mass public throughout the DC region- be they electric streetcars, diesel buses, door-to-door paratransit, zero-emissions vehicles or heavy rail with and without automatic train control at Metro. We understand that technology can and must play a role in transit.

Additionally, as a Union of transit and transportation workers, we are often highly supportive of funding for projects that increase access, frequency, and reliability for a range of transit and transportation services. However, Magnetic Levitation Transportation System or Maglev, is neither a practical nor economical way for Marylanders to move. Especially seeing as the state is currently attempting to rectify structural deficits in the Transportation Trust Fund and General Funds, we do not believe that throwing good money after bad is remotely admissible.

SB 55 would prohibit the use of state funds for this distraction. Valuable dollars should be used in shoring up our existing transportation systems and increasing their safety, frequency, and reliability or in building valuable projects rooted in proven ability to meet the demands of a modern transportation system.

Local 689 thanks Senator Washington for introducing this worthy measure and urges the committee to issue a favorable report.

SB 55 - State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations

Uploaded by: Michael McMillan

Position: FAV

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1300

126 W. 25th Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21218
Telephone: 410-889-3566 Facsimile: 410-243-5541
www.atu1300.org

Proudly representing the transit workers of the MTA!



SB 55 - State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

Favorable

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
January 29th, 2025

ATU Local 1300 represents over 3,000 transit workers at the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). This includes bus operators, bus mechanics, rail operators, rail maintenance workers, and more. Our members keep Maryland moving every day.

Maglev trains are not a real or viable transportation solution that fits Maryland's needs. SB 55 helps take that distraction off the table, by making it clear that no state money will be used for such a project. With that distraction gone, Marylanders can refocus on real transportation solutions like expanding our existing bus and rail services.

We urge a favorable report on SB 55.

SB0055 Favorable - MCRT Testimony on Prohibited Ap

Uploaded by: Rhonda Kranz

Position: FAV



Committee: Senate Budget and Taxation
Testimony on: SB-0055 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System
Organization: Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit
Submitting: Rhonda Kranz, President
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: January 29, 2025

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for accepting the Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit's (MCRT's) written testimony in support of SB0055. The MCRT evaluates transit projects for social equity, environmental impact, environmental justice, economic viability, and community accessibility. We represent a statewide coalition of communities, civic organizations, environmental groups, and residents. This bill will bring much-needed protection of public funds by prohibiting the State and certain units and instrumentalities of the State from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation transportation system in the State; and providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries.

Maryland has experienced significant cost overruns in large transportation projects. The Purple Line has encountered major financial problems with a cost overrun of \$1.4 billion. Excessive cost overruns in development of the Intercounty Connector cost millions of federal taxpayers' dollars. It is essential that Maryland does not take responsibility for delays and contractual problems if the proposed Superconducting Magnetic Levitation (SCMaglev) train project is approved. In fact, as the SCMaglev is a project proposed by Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR), a private company, rather than a public-private partnership, Maryland taxpayers should not be responsible for funding any part of the proposed or future maglev projects.

To date, no major public rail system in the world operates without government subsidy. Taxpayers have already covered the over-five-million federal and state dollars for the current SCMaglev environmental assessment processes (e.g., the Draft Environmental Impact Statement [DEIS] and environmental certifications). At this juncture, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has run out of funding for the next step of developing an EIS and will need more federal dollars. Future projects would undeniably depend on a large amount of state and federal funds for certification and compliance.

BWRR—again, a private company—repeatedly has stated in their arguments in opposition to this bill that, while they do not need state funds, they want them to be available just in case financial

support is needed “later” in the project’s implementation. Our concern is that *now* is their *later* because the current federal funds have been fully expended.

Maryland’s transportation investments face persistent state funding difficulties, especially now with the current budget deficit. Cost-cutting and carefully-deliberated choices need to be made. Maryland should be focused on providing affordable and accessible transportation for all members of our communities. The SCMaglev would be built with three stops—Washington, D.C., Baltimore-Washington International Airport, and Baltimore— and no stops within the communities it would run through. Baltimore, Prince George’s, Anne Arundel, and Baltimore Counties would incur major financial and environmental costs of building the train. Most of the burden will be on already overburdened environmental justice communities. The SCMaglev’s excessively expensive ridership cost would benefit only an exceedingly small fraction of the state’s population.

Maryland is making great strides in adopting climate friendly policies, many targeted to be met by 2031. Analyses find that the SCMaglev would generate more greenhouse gases during construction than it is likely to save over several decades of operation. With a construction timeline of eight-to-ten years before ridership even begins, the SCMaglev would be significantly increasing, not decreasing, Maryland’s emissions, setting us back from achieving our emission reduction goals.

Why prohibit appropriations for all maglev systems? There are multiple concerns regarding the SCMaglev, including the loss of important ecological habitats, environmental justice and public health impacts, and the safety of the technology, as well as whether it would in fact lead to a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions. Most of these concerns, particularly environmental and health impacts, are inherent in the maglev technology rather than specific to the current proposal. Another important concern is that the technology is developed and maintained in Japan. Rather than benefiting Maryland, the investment in equipment and maintenance would benefit Japanese business resources and expertise.

Maglev trains are not compatible with the Maryland's existing transportation systems. They require their own operating systems that would run underground and/or on elevated tracks that can be up to 150 feet in the air. And they take massive amounts of land to build and operate. The proposed SCMaglev project includes a rail maintenance yard larger than Disneyland that would be located on federal property.

Why would Maryland need a new rail system when we have existing transit with AMTRAK, MARC, and Bus Rapid Transit? The FRA, through the Northeastern Corridor Future program, has already developed a long-term vision and investment program with regional stakeholders. Billions of dollars have been committed to major upgrades to the existing Acela equipment that reaches speeds comparable to maglev trains. Marylanders deserve their taxpayer dollars to be used for commuter options that benefit all citizens; not gamble on still untested technology that would benefit only a small and wealthy minority.

Maryland residents should not have to bear the financial costs of any maglev project that is not fully funded by the private developer, especially if the project runs into difficulties and escalating costs as we have seen in previous transportation projects as stated above. For the reasons given above, we thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony and urge a FAVORABLE vote for SB0055.

Favorable Testimony - SB0055 - State Finance - Pro

Uploaded by: Susan McCutchen

Position: FAV

January 27, 2025

**Written Testimony in Favor of SB0055 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations –
Magnetic Levitation Transportation System (cross-file HB0400)**

Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

My name is Susan McCutchen, a member of the Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit, submitting written testimony as an individual. I am speaking in support of SB0055, sponsored by Senators A. Washington, Augustine, and Beidle. This bill would prohibit Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) from appropriating funds from the state of Maryland to build the proposed SCMaglev transportation system, “providing that the prohibition does not apply to certain expenditures for salaries” of state employees. This exception is responsive to and directly addresses concerns expressed by Northeast Maglev that a previous iteration of this bill had unintended consequences in that it would inadvertently tie their hands to work with the appropriate state personnel to acquire permits or other required approvals should the project go forward.

I understand that BWRR is actively seeking additional funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funds and other grant sources to continue to tap into federal taxpayer funds. A private company, BWRR repeatedly has stated in their arguments in opposition to this bill that, while they do not need state funds, they want them to be available just in case financial support is needed “later” in the project’s implementation. My concern is that *now* is their “later” because their federal funds have been fully expended. Furthermore, they proffer the hackneyed argument that such legislation would send the wrong message to developers of innovative forms of transportation and discourage them from doing business with Maryland. *The reality is that this bill would address only one specific overblown proposed project* that has proven unable to support broad and questionable promises of an influx of good-paying jobs, advanced technology education programs, and the uplifting of environmental justice communities to bring them and the state untold prosperity.

Maryland’s viable transportation projects that serve our communities currently face persistent state funding difficulties. Urgent and practical cost-cutting choices will need to be made. The SCMaglev project, shamelessly promoted as an *eventual* fast travel option from DC to New York as a convincing selling point, is not the kind of commuter train needed for the Northeast Corridor. Extremely costly, the projected costs will increase exponentially when the actual work is undertaken.

As a result, the ability of BWRR to either continue or complete the project will be curtailed. BWRR and its partners will seek additional funds from bank loans as well as from Maryland, in addition to the federal government. Government funds are taxpayer dollars. We the people will pay—and already have from the chunk of federal government funds allocated and expended to undertake the study and meet NEPA requirements.

The Japanese government intends to invest in the SCMaglev project, thereby becoming a BWRR partner. They will own an as-yet undetermined percentage of this project. Their technology and expertise will anchor the construction and operation of the SCMaglev. They will seek a profit above all no matter how many fees Japan waives for BWRR to acquire the technology. I do not relish the Japanese owning a piece of Maryland’s Northeast Corridor and demanding repayment should the project falter or perhaps not be able to be finished. They and all interested parties will no doubt expect to be repaid for their investments in building and operating the train. Again, we the people will pay to complete a foundering project or suffer living with a useless, uncompleted behemoth dissecting our communities.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony favorable to SB0055, which I look forward to moving out of committee.

Sincerely,

Susan R. McCutchen

5404 Spring Road, Bladensburg, Maryland
Tel: 301-699-9035

SB0055 Support Letter (1-27-25).pdf

Uploaded by: Tom Taylor

Position: FAV

January 27, 2025

Subject: Written Testimony in Favor of SB0055 – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System (Cross-file HB0400)

To: Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee

I am writing in support of SB0055, sponsored by Senators A. Washington, Augustine, and Beidle.

Senate Bill SB0055 would prohibit Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) from appropriating funds from the state of Maryland to build the proposed SCMaglev transportation system.

I support SB0055 because Maryland is facing severe budget constraints in general, and in transportation funding in particular. State funding needs to be allocated toward urgent and practical transportation projects that benefit all Maryland citizens and all the taxpayers who pay for these projects. Such projects need to be affordable and accessible to all, and address a wide range of needs across the state.

The SCMaglev will serve only the Baltimore-Washington corridor, will be accessible at only three stops, and ticket prices are projected to be expensive. Thus, the proposed project does not meet acceptable criteria of accessibility and affordability, and does not address the broader range of pressing transportation issues facing Maryland.

Given the state's budget issues and other more urgent transportation needs, any state funding for this project is very unwise, even if for provisional back-up funding in the future. Such projects always run the risk of untenable amounts of cost overruns that significantly strain the state's limited funding resources.

The SCMaglev project also presents major environmental issues. The projected route for the train will destroy hundreds of acres of wild green spaces – including large swaths of a forest preserve, wetlands, and a wildlife refuge – all of which are essential ecosystem services needed for CO² storage, climate cooling, and clean air and water. These green spaces make up a sizable part of an area known as the "lungs of the Chesapeake."

In addition, recent research indicates that, for likely several decades to come, construction of the SCMaglev will generate more greenhouse gases than it will save. Given the climate crisis, we cannot wait decades for what is only a projected greenhouse gas reduction.

BWRR also has yet to demonstrate to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) that the construction of this project will meet MDE's requirements for protecting our waterways.

For all these reasons, any appropriation of state funds for the SCMaglev project would be an unwise use of limited state funds.

I urge that SB0055 be given a favorable vote and moved out of committee.

Sincerely,

Tom Taylor
11-G Laurel Hill Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770
301-513-9524

SB0055_MAGLEV_MLC_FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FWA



TESTIMONY FOR SB0055

State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

Bill Sponsor: Senator Washington

Committee: Education, Energy and the Environment

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0055 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

The MAGLEV project is a very divisive project in our state. It was conceived in much the same way that we have conceived most of our transportation projects in the past decade – with the thought of how the wealthy will benefit and with no thought about the low- to mid- income people who would suffer.

The MAGLEV would tear through already overburdened communities in Prince George's County and have no real benefit for them. No stops anywhere in the county. This just can't continue to happen.

This bill prohibits the use of state funds for the MAGLEV. We could not agree more that, in its current form, there should be no money available for it. However, we do not believe in precluding the state from ever having a MAGLEV, so we propose an amendment that if a future MAGLEV project was conceived following proper environmental guidance and environmental justice guidance, the project should be able to move forward with state funding.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report in committee.

Updated Adrian Harpool_Opposition SB 55[44].pdf

Uploaded by: Adrian Harpool

Position: UNF

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

Co-Founder

My Minority Business Counts Coalition

aha@adrianharpool.com

443-226-4427

Baltimore Times Opposition SB 55.pdf

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF

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

DH SB 55 Opposition.pdf

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF

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 name is Deborah Harrington, and I am a resident of Prince George's County, Maryland. I am writing to express my strong opposition to **Senate Bill 55**, which seeks to prohibit the use of state funds for the development of a magnetic levitation (maglev) transportation system in Maryland. The Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project represents an opportunity for Maryland to lead the nation in historic investments in the future of transportation. However, this bill puts at risk this opportunity to improve our infrastructure and grow our economy.

As Maryland faces a \$3 billion budget deficit, we need to be focused on transformational infrastructure projects that can fuel long-term economic growth, create thousands of jobs, and help modernize our state's transportation system. The Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project—a high-speed maglev system connecting Washington, D.C., and Baltimore, with future plans to extend to New York City—is one of the most promising projects on the table. It represents a unique opportunity to position Maryland as a leader in sustainable transportation and economic development. I believe this project is too important for Maryland's future to be blocked by legislation like Senate Bill 55.

I had the privilege of riding the maglev train in Tokyo last summer, and I can say firsthand that it was a revolutionary experience. The smooth, quiet ride, the speed, and the efficiency of the system were unlike anything I had experienced before. The maglev system in Japan connects major cities and has transformed how people move across the country, drastically cutting travel times while providing a sustainable, environmentally friendly mode of transport. Maryland has the opportunity to bring this same level of innovation to our region—and not just between Baltimore and Washington, D.C., but also in the broader context of connecting the Northeast Corridor, extending eventually to New York City. This project is a critical step toward improving our regional connectivity, and blocking it would be a major step backward for Maryland.

The SCMAGLEV project will generate thousands of high-wage jobs in the construction, operation, and long-term maintenance of the system. These jobs will provide much-needed economic opportunity, especially in historically underserved communities. The construction of this high-speed rail will create jobs not only for engineers and construction workers but also for a wide range of other sectors, including technology, logistics, and manufacturing. At a time when Maryland is facing a budget deficit, this is exactly the kind of investment we need to stimulate our economy and provide a pathway to long-term growth.

The SCMAGLEV project is also critical to meeting Maryland's climate goals. Powered by electricity and producing zero emissions, this system would be a major step toward reducing our carbon footprint and combating climate change. The environmental benefits cannot be overstated—by reducing the number of cars on the road, the maglev system will help alleviate congestion, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and improve air quality, particularly in urban areas where pollution is most pronounced. This is especially important for communities of color, who are disproportionately impacted by environmental degradation.

Having utilized the system and technology, I firmly believe that Maryland has the potential to lead the way in transforming transportation in the U.S. Just as Japan has revolutionized intercity travel, the SCMAGLEV system could transform the way we move people and goods along the Baltimore-Washington-New York Corridor.

Maryland deserves the opportunity to embrace this cutting-edge technology, especially given the promise it holds for creating jobs, improving connectivity, and addressing environmental challenges.

I urge the committee to **reject Senate Bill 55**. This bill stands in the way of smart projects, like the Northeast Maglev, which would be a critical initiative that will benefit Maryland's economy, workforce, and environment for generations to come. We cannot afford to block this transformational opportunity, especially when it has the potential to reshape our state's future and ensure that Maryland remains at the forefront of transportation innovation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Deborah Harrington

MBCP.pdf

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF

January 23, 2025

SB0055

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB0055 —STATE FINANCE — PROHIBITED APPROPRIATIONS — MAGNETIC LEVITATION
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Position: OPPOSED

Dear Chair Guzzone, Chair Feldman, and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation and Education, Energy, and the Environment Committees, I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Business Clergy Partnership (MBCP) to share our opposition to SB0055 and our strong support for the Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) high-speed rail project (MAGLEV) that will connect Baltimore to Washington D.C. in 15 minutes. MBCP is a bipartisan organization with a mission to bridge the gaps between businesses, faith-based communities, elected officials and governments.

Our goal is to make a difference in every community throughout Maryland by changing the political climate through policy and advocacy to open doors for all. MBCP has led numerous successful campaigns that have produced real change throughout the state. We feel strongly about partnering with businesses, organizations, and activists that are committed to help producing change from within. A project like BWRR's signifies opportunities, education, and hope for our state in a time where opportunities are lacking. Thousands of jobs will be created in the region not only during the construction phase of the project but will also serve as a pathway to various employment fields and provide workforce training.

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail is dedicated to working with organizations like ours to develop the necessary education programs to build this workforce. The newly educated and skilled workers will have a lasting effect for generations to come. This bill could prohibit the state of Maryland and its citizens from seeing the benefits of a project like this. The project would bring a \$8.8 billion increase in employee earnings to Maryland from construction and \$268 million annually from operations and would mean opportunities for contracts for local businesses and cleaner air for all.

Seeing as our mission is to serve as a proponent for opportunity and change for Maryland residents, this bill stands in the way of the very principles our organization is built on. Thus, we ask that you submit an unfavorable report on SB0055.

Sincerely,



Lisa Ellis, Director of Marketing & Communications
Maryland Business & Clergy Partnership
204 Washington Avenue,
Laplata, Maryland 20646
(301) 535-8783

PGCBA.pdf

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF

January 24, 2025

SB0055 – UNFAVORABLE TESTIMONY

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Opposition to SB 0055 State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation
Transportation System

Dear Chair Guzzone:

The Prince George's Contractors and Business Association (PGCBA) has provided strong leadership and advocacy for issues that enhance the opportunity for small, women and minority businesses to exist and grow. PGCBA was established in 1989 and has 35 years of experience in fostering small and medium-sized, women and minority businesses. Our Mission is to assure that the businesses that we represent have a fair, equitable opportunity to create wealth and employ citizens within our communities. This includes access to vehicles that provide capital and resources. This bill is uncalled for and anti-business. Maryland is looking to attract businesses, not limit and punish good corporate partners who have never asked for State funds.


We wish to share with you our support for the Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail high-speed rail project that will connect Baltimore to Washington D.C. in 15 minutes and will provide \$4 billion in economic opportunities to minority and women owned businesses.

I have been fortunate to have in-depth conversations with Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail about their plans to develop the MAGLEV system equitably. Making sure that women and people of color have equitable access to the multitude of opportunities associated with this project is crucial to aligning with our state's ambition of building a brighter future for all Marylanders.

BWRR is not asking, and has pledged not to ask, for state funds in developing the project. This means SB0055 is a bad solution to a non-existent problem. Additionally, it sends a frightening message to future generations that we have no qualms making short-sighted decisions before they even have a chance to weigh in, an affront to their autonomy. All Marylanders must have every tool at their disposal to fight the climate crisis and build safe and reliable transportation systems.

I ask that the committee **submit an unfavorable report on this bill.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Gaskins', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Joseph Gaskins
President & Chairman of the Board

SB 55 Opposition Testimony_Hispanic Chamber.pdf

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF



January 27, 2025

SB 55

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Vice Chair, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB 55 —STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED APPROPRIATIONS –
MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Dear Chair Guzzone, Chair Feldman, and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation and Education, Energy, and the Environment Committees,

On behalf of the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's hundreds of member businesses and thousands of employees throughout the state, this letter is in opposition to SB 55 - State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System.

As this chamber is well-aware, the state is facing major budget shortfalls that will force leadership to make difficult choices about how to invest in Maryland's future. Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail have never asked the state for funds, meaning this bill addresses a non-existent issue. Why waste the legislature's time focused a on non-issue when there are clearly more pressing matters to attend to?

Furthermore, this legislation has not changed from prior appearances before this committee. Passage of this obstructionist legislation would make a strong statement about Maryland – that State leadership is closed to innovation.

We believe the State and the region should be open to any and all ideas that seek to ameliorate our pressing problem of congestion, which threatens our economy's growth on a daily basis. Large scale investments in our state should be encouraged as they provide substantial jobs and enhancement to the economic health of our business community. We ask you to please vote UNFAVORABLE on this short-sighted bill which reflects the lack of long-range planning for our community's future and that of the State. Thank you for your consideration of our remarks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Marco V. Ávila, P.E.' with a stylized flourish underneath.

Marco V. Ávila, P.E.

Chairman of the Board & President/CEO
Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
chair@mdhcc.org - 443-519-6909

SB 55_Bi-County Business Roundtable Testimony_UNF.

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF



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 Bi-County Business Roundtable is an organization representing businesses throughout the state of Maryland. We are one of the largest roundtables in the state and surrounding Washington Metropolitan region. We have earned our well-deserved reputation as the “Voice of the voiceless and the go-to for small business.” It is our aggressive pursuit of a healthy economic climate for business and an improved quality of life for local residents. At the core of our mission is the goal of advancing the interests of small business and helping to create wealth for a vibrant climate in the state of Maryland.

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 bill poses a significant threat to the Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project, a transformative initiative with the potential to drive economic growth, create jobs, and establish Maryland as a leader in innovative infrastructure. With a \$4 billion commitment to minority and women-owned business enterprises, this project ensures that local businesses will directly benefit from its development. From construction and engineering contracts to operational and maintenance roles, the economic impact of the SCMAGLEV will ripple across communities, creating thousands of well-paying jobs and fostering long-term business growth.

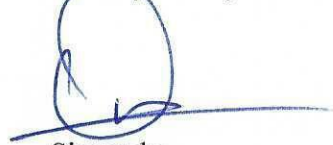
Additionally, the SCMAGLEV project strengthens Maryland’s position in the global economy by fostering international partnerships. Through collaboration with Japan’s Central Japan Railway Company, the maglev system introduces cutting-edge technology to the Northeast Corridor, positioning Maryland at the forefront of transportation innovation. These global ties not only enhance the state’s competitiveness but also create opportunities for workforce development, educational partnerships, and knowledge sharing that will prepare Marylanders for emerging industries.

Senate Bill 55’s restrictions would effectively halt the SCMAGLEV project and prevent these benefits from materializing. Large-scale infrastructure projects like maglev rely on streamlined land acquisition processes to move forward efficiently. This bill creates a precedent that could hinder future initiatives, denying Maryland businesses and workers the opportunities they deserve.

This legislation also sends an anti-growth message that contradicts Maryland’s commitment to fostering innovation, attracting investment, and supporting its business community. The SCMAGLEV project is more than a transportation upgrade—it is a catalyst for economic advancement that will support small businesses, create jobs, and enhance connectivity across the region.

For these reasons, the Bi-County Business Roundtable urges the committee to issue an **unfavorable** report on Senate Bill 55. Supporting transformative projects like the SCMAGLEV is essential to ensuring Maryland's continued growth and prosperity.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Darryl Barnes', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Sincerely,
Darryl Barnes
President
Bi-County Business Roundtable
Office – 301.437.0225
Email – dbarnes@bcbroundtable.com

SB 55_Bulldog_UNF.pdf

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF



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:

Bulldog Distribution Trucking is a certified minority-owned small business based in Prince George's County, Maryland that specializes in supplying premium truck hauling material and construction services on heavy infrastructure projects in and around Maryland. We have been in business since 2010 and have grown from 1 truck to 20 trucks with a full administrative staff.

Senate Bill 55 prohibits the State from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation 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.

Bulldog Trucking opposes Senate Bill 55 because we see this legislation, should it pass, greatly impacting the SCMAGLEV project currently in development in the region. While our company has no relationship with the Northeast Maglev, and no deal with them, I recognize that this is exactly the kind of project that would be very important and very beneficial to small businesses like mine. We are struggling- the jobs are just not there. It's our understanding that they will need a lot of trucks during the construction phase. As I mentioned, we are a minority business that could offer our services to a project like this and greatly benefit.

We appreciate you taking the time to consider our request for an **UNFAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 55.

Thank you,

Miguel Lambert, CEO
Bulldog Distribution Trucking

Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 55_GWBCC.pd

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF



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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A Bond", is positioned above the typed name.

Aisha Bond, Esq.

President/CEO

Greater Washington Black Chamber of Commerce

SB 55 MDCC State Finance – Prohibited Appropriatio

Uploaded by: Hannah Allen

Position: UNF



MARYLAND
Chamber of Commerce

LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

UNFAVORABLE

Senate Bill 55

Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System

Budget and Taxation Committee

Wednesday, January 29, 2025

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Members of the Committee:

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber) is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth and recovery for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

Senate Bill 55 would create significant barriers for public and private investment in the construction of a magnetic levitation (maglev) transportation system connecting Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. The legislation would essentially render any maglev project nearly impossible to construct.

The Chamber believes that improved state transportation networks boost economic opportunity, and we work to advance short- and long-term solutions to statewide transit needs. Mass transportation projects, such as maglev, create jobs, generate economic activity and transform Maryland into a leader in 21st-century transportation solutions.

Further, increased transit options would dramatically reduce commute times, thereby increasing productivity and unleashing new opportunities for businesses statewide. Enhanced options for Maryland commuters would also lessen the state's carbon footprint by reducing the number of cars on the road.

Finally, SB 55 represents the “slippery slope” of the use of public funds for the state's mass transportation projects. The Chamber is concerned with the potential precedent setting nature of banning the use of public funds for one project versus another.

For these reasons, the Chamber respectfully requests an **unfavorable report** on **SB 55**.

MDCHAMBER.ORG

60 West Street, Suite 100, Annapolis 21401 | 410-269-0642

SB55_BWRR testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Ian Rainey

Position: UNF

January 29, 2025

SB0055

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Maryland General Assembly
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB0055—STATE FINANCE – PROHIBITED
APPROPRIATIONS – MAGNETIC LEVITATION TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ian Rainey, and I am the Senior Vice President of Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR). I appear before you today to convey our strong opposition to SB0055.

SB0055 aims to prohibit any appropriations from being used by the State or certain units or instrumentalities of the State for a magnetic levitation system in Maryland.

One of the main arguments behind this bill is that the Maryland taxpayer should never be “on the hook” for a project such as ours, implying that State funds are better used elsewhere to improve and upgrade existing rail. We agree that the State should focus on improving state-run transportation projects, which is why we have never asked the legislature for financial support.

Additionally, our current rail infrastructure has already nearly met its physical limits. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) conducted by MDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) confirms that the Baltimore—Washington, DC Maglev service would, in fact, alleviate pressure on current rail infrastructure and Maryland taxpayers. It states, “To the degree that trains in the corridor are expected to be at capacity between 2030 and 2045, these diversions [to maglev] free up capacity for additional travelers without making public investment to add capacity.”

In other words, by alleviating stress on over-capacity systems, such as MARC and Amtrak, taxpayers will see savings through added transit capacity and reduced traffic – without state appropriations. These savings can be reinvested in improving other transportation systems throughout the state, providing lawmakers the opportunity to invest in the well-rounded transit future so many Marylanders wish to see.

We need new world class transit systems to build our economy, create jobs, fight climate change, and provide workforce opportunity to our diverse population. SB0055 would signal to Maryland citizens and to the world that the state is closed to innovative, future-oriented, safe solutions to our worsening transportation issues.

For these reasons, Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail strongly opposes SB0055 and urges the committees to submit an unfavorable report. Thank you for the opportunity to appear.



Sincerely,

Ian Rainey
Ian Rainey
Senior Vice President

Testimony SB 0055 GBC.pdf

Uploaded by: Jennifer Vey

Position: UNF



Written Testimony to the Budget and Taxation and Education, Energy, and the Environment Committees

**SB.0055 – State Finance - Prohibited Appropriations - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System
Sponsors: Senators A. Washington, Augustine, and Beidle**

January 29, 2025

Position: Oppose

The GBC's 2022 merger with the Economic Alliance of Greater Baltimore positions our organization to unify business, civic, tech, academic, faith, and nonprofit stakeholders to support bold economic opportunities for the region. Our initiatives—which include elevating the Baltimore Region as one of the premiere innovation hubs in the world—will ensure our communities and economy are at the cutting-edge of transformative technologies that will power the next generation of companies and science.

Transportation innovation is alive and well in America.

States and regions that compete with Maryland for talent and entrepreneurs are hubs for research, development, and piloting of autonomous, electric, and green vehicles, and advanced shuttles and transport systems. These innovative cultures are hubs of new technologies to advance freight, air, port, and train travel. It is a remarkable transformation from a history of innovation that roots back to the first commercial train travel in America, in Maryland.

Accelerator programs for mobility innovation, state-level incentives to advance the creation of new job centers, and high-speed transportation research and development have touched rural states—including our neighbor West Virginia—and served to spark ecosystems of entrepreneurs thinking light-years ahead in the fastest growing technology hubs in the country.

We encourage you to submit an unfavorable report.

It's crucial that our state's public and private sector leaders support a message that we're "open for aspiration" at a time where Maryland is largely missing from the vast community of innovation addressing how we move people and goods and connect communities.

The state has not committed any public investment for technologies to advance magnetic levitation transportation systems, but this is an area of opportunity that is a focus of research and development in the U.S. and abroad.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Anthony Thomas", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Anthony Thomas
President & Chief Executive Officer

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

111 South Calvert Street • Suite 1700 • Baltimore, Maryland • 21202-6180

(410) 727-2820 • www.gbc.org

Carpenters_SB 55 Opposition.pdf

Uploaded by: Lamar Mutts

Position: UNF

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

SB 55_MTBMA_UNF.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Sakata

Position: UNF



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 Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association (“MTBMA”) has been and continues to serve as the voice for Maryland’s construction transportation industry since 1932. Our association is comprised of 200 members. MTBMA encourages, develops, and protects the prestige of the transportation construction and materials industry in Maryland by establishing and maintaining respected relationships with federal, state, and local public officials. We proactively work with regulatory agencies and governing bodies to represent the interests of the transportation industry and advocate for adequate state and federal funding for Maryland’s multimodal transportation system.

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.

MTBMA opposes Senate Bill 55 because it is a boldfaced attack on the SCMAGLEV project currently in development in the region. Maglev rail systems represent cutting-edge transportation technology. Their construction requires specialized skills and training, providing a pathway for workers to engage in innovative and technically advanced projects. If such projects are stalled or canceled, the transportation construction community might lose the opportunity to advance skills and expertise in emerging technologies. The transportation construction community thrives on large-scale projects that require extensive planning, labor, and resources. Any legislation that restricts or complicates such developments can have a ripple effect, reducing opportunities, income, and advancement potential for those in the field.

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail has been working hand-in-hand with over thirty federal, State, and local agencies in the years-long process being led by the Federal Railroad Administration. To layer over this established process with a blanket prohibition against any State funding would be tantamount to stopping the SCMAGLEV project and would put in question the legal framework upon which all large-scale infrastructure projects rely.

We appreciate you taking the time to consider our request for an **UNFAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 55.

Thank you,

Michael Sakata
President and CEO
Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association

SB 55 Ray Baker Baltimore DC Building Trades (UNFA

Uploaded by: Ray Baker

Position: UNF



January 29, 2025

The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
The Honorable Jim Rosapepe, Vice Chair
Budget and Tax Committee
101 James Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Testimony of Ray Baker on
SB 55 – State Finance Prohibited Appropriations Magnetic Levitation Transportation System
Position: UNFAVORABLE**

Thank you Chair Guzzone and Vice Chair Rosapepe and members of the Senate Budget and Tax Committee for the opportunity to testify in opposition to SB 55. My name is Ray Baker. I am the Maryland Director for the Baltimore-DC Building Trades (BDCBT). The BDCBT represents 28 construction trade unions across Maryland, Northern Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Combined, our trade unions represent more than 30,000 of skilled craft professionals in the construction industry.

The BDCBT strongly opposes SB 55. SCMAGLEV does not include any state financing, and it doesn't need it. Construction costs will be split among the Japanese government, the Central Japan Railway, and the U.S. government. Independent ridership and revenue studies validate the financial feasibility of the project, and revenues will offset operating and maintenance costs. Moreover, the federal government funded the environmental study through its Maglev Deployment Program, with matching funds from the private sector.

The BDCBT believes that the SCMAGLEV would transform the Northeast region by reducing travel times between New York City and Washington, DC to under one hour. The first phase would connect Washington, DC and Baltimore in just 15 minutes. At the same time, the project would provide much-needed job opportunities, including quality union construction jobs that will create a pathway to the middle class for Baltimore-Washington area residents. According to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), construction of the first phase alone would result in the creation of more than 160,000 regional jobs. Another benefit is that the project would take up to 16 million cars off the road, substantially reducing congestion and improving our region's air quality.

Finally, SB 55 is a preemptive action to a problem that does not exist and would ultimately only create future complications for our state's potential investment opportunities.

The BDCBT urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report on SB 55.

Ray Baker
Maryland Director, BDCBT
RBaker@BDCBT.org
410.585.7862

Aaron Bast_Iron Workers Local 5_HB400 SB55_UNFAV.p

Uploaded by: Roger Manno

Position: UNF



TESTIMONY OF AARON BAST, BUSINESS MANAGER AND FINANCIAL
SECRETARY TREASURER, IRON WORKERS LOCAL 5

BEFORE THE SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE, HOUSE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE, AND HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

IN OPPOSITION TO HB400 / SB55

Dear Chairs Guzzone, Barnes, Feldman, Korman, and members of the committees,

As Business Manager / Financial secretary Treasurer of Iron Workers Local 5, representing thousands of skilled union ironworkers across the Mid-Atlantic, I write to strongly oppose HB400 / SB55, which would hinder progress on the Maglev train project—a critical infrastructure initiative poised to bring transformative benefits to our communities and workforce.

The Maglev train project is a groundbreaking opportunity to modernize transportation between Baltimore and Washington, D.C., offering clean, efficient, and sustainable transit while significantly easing traffic congestion and reducing emissions. More than just an infrastructure project, Maglev represents an economic engine that will create good-paying union jobs, provide career opportunities, and support middle-class families.

The Maglev project will generate thousands of union construction jobs, ensuring workers receive fair wages, benefits, and access to apprenticeship programs. These jobs will provide long-term economic stability for our members and help train the next generation of skilled ironworkers, ensuring a sustainable future for Maryland's workforce.

Our members are ready to build the future with safe, reliable, and high-quality craftsmanship. The Maglev project aligns with our union's mission to provide fair wages, strong labor protections, and opportunities for career growth.

Beyond job creation, the Maglev project will inject billions into the local economy, fostering business growth and economic development in the surrounding communities. Improved transportation will open up new job opportunities, reduce commute times, and enhance regional connectivity. Additionally, it supports Maryland's commitment to clean energy by reducing fossil fuel dependency and cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

The benefits of Maglev extend far beyond the construction phase, as it will provide ongoing economic and environmental advantages for generations to come.

Iron Workers Local 5 urges you to reject HB400 / SB55, which threatens to derail an essential infrastructure project and deny Maryland the significant economic and employment opportunities it promises. We respectfully ask for an unfavorable report and encourage lawmakers to support policies that advance sustainable transportation and good union jobs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Aaron Bast
Business Manager and Financial Secretary Treasurer
Iron Workers Local 5

M&A_Mungu Sanchez_EASRCC Carpenters_testimony_ HB5

Uploaded by: Roger Manno

Position: UNF



Eastern Atlantic States REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

8500 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 | Phone: 301-735-6660 | EASCARPENTERS.ORG

Testimony of Mungu Sanchez of the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters

In Opposition to HB400 / SB55

Before the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, House Appropriations Committee,
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, and House Environment
and Transportation Committee

Dear Chairs Guzzone, Barnes, Feldman, and Korman,

On behalf of the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC), which represents thousands of dedicated union carpenters across the Mid-Atlantic region, I am writing to respectfully oppose HB400 / SB55, legislation that would hinder the advancement of the Maglev train project, a transformative infrastructure investment with far-reaching benefits for our communities and workforce.

The Maglev train project presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to revolutionize transportation along the Baltimore-Washington corridor, providing clean, efficient, and sustainable mobility solutions while significantly reducing congestion and emissions. This project is not just about transportation; it's about economic opportunity, offering high-quality, union jobs that support working families, create pathways to the middle class, and foster long-term career development in skilled trades.

The Maglev project has the potential to create thousands of union construction jobs with strong labor standards, ensuring prevailing wages, benefits, and apprenticeships that empower the next generation of skilled tradespeople. This project aligns with our commitment to fair wages, safe working conditions, and career advancement, helping to sustain the middle class and ensure a thriving labor force for years to come.

Additionally, the Maglev initiative will generate new training opportunities for apprentices in our region, helping to address workforce shortages and equip workers with the specialized skills needed for 21st-century infrastructure projects. Union carpenters will play a pivotal role in constructing state-of-the-art stations and track systems that will serve Marylanders for decades to come.

Beyond job creation, the Maglev project promises to stimulate local economies, attract private investment, and support businesses in the surrounding areas. Improved transportation options will allow workers to access new employment opportunities, reduce travel time, and enhance regional connectivity. The economic ripple effects of this project will benefit not only construction workers but also small businesses and local communities throughout Maryland.

Furthermore, the Maglev system aligns with Maryland's clean energy goals, offering a sustainable alternative to traditional transportation methods. Reducing dependence on fossil fuels and lowering greenhouse gas emissions will contribute to a healthier environment for future generations.

For these reasons, EASRCC strongly opposes HB400 / SB55, which threatens to derail this critical infrastructure investment and the many benefits it will bring to Maryland's economy and working families. We urge you to prioritize projects that provide long-term, sustainable employment opportunities for our skilled workforce while advancing the state's transportation and environmental objectives.

Thank you for your consideration, and we respectfully ask for an unfavorable report on HB400 / SB55.

Sincerely,

Mungu Sanchez
Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters

Patriots Tech Center SB 55 Opposition.pdf

Uploaded by: Thurman Jones

Position: UNF



Patriots Technology Training Center
5800 Martin Luther King Jr. Highway
Seat Pleasant, MD 20743

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:

As President of the Patriots Technology Training Center, I am writing to express our organization's strong opposition to SB 55.

For 22 years Patriots' mission has been "empowering students through technology". Our goal is to increase the number of 5th to 12th grade students entering into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), ultimately leading to a college education and career paths in these fields. Our various programs, camps, seminars, and activities serve to introduce youth to tomorrow's careers.

The Northeast Maglev project represents the pinnacle of opportunity for today's youth. The influx of high tech construction and operations jobs, with stations located in Baltimore, DC, and at BWI, will provide tremendous opportunity for our youth - opportunity to be part of the most advanced transportation system in the world. Once the project is complete, ultimately connecting major metropolitan areas of the Northeast Corridor, today's youth will continue to benefit with easy access to opportunities along the entire route.

SB 55 is a clear attempt to stop this project, and in effect stifle opportunity for today's youth and for future generations. Opportunity for careers, economic development, access, and a cleaner environment.

Please submit an unfavorable report on this nearsighted bill.

Sincerely,

Thurman Jones,
President
Patriots Technology Training Center