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# THE BALTIMORE TIMES

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February 14, 2025

Delegate Marc Korman, Chair  
House Environment and Transportation Committee  
250 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
120 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: HB 400 – UNFAVORABLE – State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System**

Dear Chair Korman, Chair Barnes and Members of the Committees:

I am Paris Brown, Publisher of **The Baltimore Times And The Annapolis Times**. Our newspaper is a free community publication distributed to residents of Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Anne Arundel County. For over 40 years, both publications have inspired, empowered, and informed our community about city and state issues that impact quality of life, while also sharing stories overlooked by mainstream media. We are dedicated to reporting on events and forming partnerships that enhance the lives of city and county residents. **Our publications** are committed to advocacy work that promotes economic development, health, housing, local businesses, and environmental issues. We believe that access to capital and opportunities for Black and minority-owned businesses are essential for the well-being of our community, as are the overall health and wealth of our residents. Additionally, **The Baltimore Times and The Annapolis Times** actively create awareness around local issues, and supports national initiatives that address policies that ensure the sustainability of local media outlets. We advocate for city and state initiatives that foster sustainability through increased advertising and tax credits for small businesses that advertise with local community news outlets.

House Bill 400 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 travel to Tokyo last summer on a trip 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.

This bill sends the wrong message about Maryland's commitment to progress. It risks stalling a project that could provide widespread benefits for residents and businesses alike. For these reasons, The Baltimore Times urges the committee to issue an **unfavorable** report on House Bill 400 and preserve Maryland's ability to pursue transformative infrastructure projects that promote growth and opportunity for all.

Sincerely,

Paris Brown, Publisher  
The Baltimore Times