



January 30, 2025

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

RE: HB 48 - UNFAVORABLE - Railroad Companies - Condemnation Authority - Application

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

My name is José Sueiro, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Metro DC Hispanic Contractors Association to express our opposition to House Bill 48, which prohibits entities operating maglev-powered railroads from utilizing condemnation authority—an essential tool afforded to all other railroad companies in the state.

As an organization dedicated to empowering Hispanic contractors and advancing equitable opportunities for minority-owned businesses, we believe that HB 48 would eliminate significant economic and professional opportunities for the small business community, while also hindering Maryland's progress toward innovative transportation solutions.

Economic Opportunities for Minority-Owned Businesses

The Maglev project represents a major infrastructure undertaking that would provide countless opportunities for Hispanic contractors and other small business owners to participate in and benefit from public projects. This includes:

- **Subcontracting Opportunities:** Large-scale infrastructure projects like Maglev rely heavily on subcontractors for a variety of services, from construction and electrical work to landscaping and maintenance. Hispanic contractors in Maryland could be well-positioned to secure these contracts, fostering economic growth within their communities.
- **Workforce Development:** Projects of this scale create jobs across multiple industries, providing high-quality employment and training opportunities for Maryland's skilled labor force, including the Hispanic community. For many, these projects are pathways to economic stability and upward mobility.

Strengthening Maryland's Infrastructure and Economy

The Maglev system is not just a transportation project—it is a transformative initiative that could modernize Maryland's infrastructure, making it a leader in efficient, high-speed transportation. This would enhance connectivity between economic hubs, reduce travel times, and increase the region's competitiveness on a national scale. The ripple effects of such a project would extend to small businesses, service providers, and local communities.

Equity and Inclusion Concerns

Maryland has made significant strides in promoting diversity and inclusion in state-funded projects. By barring condemnation authority for Maglev, HB 48 would undercut these efforts, depriving Hispanic and other minority-owned businesses of access to contracts and resources they need to grow and thrive. These businesses are critical to Maryland's economy, and their exclusion from such an impactful initiative would perpetuate systemic disparities.

Environmental Benefits

Opponents of Maglev have raised environmental concerns, but it is important to acknowledge the long-term benefits of this technology. Maglev transportation is highly energy-efficient, produces minimal emissions, and offers a sustainable alternative to traditional modes of transport. For a state like Maryland, which prioritizes environmental stewardship, Maglev could support its climate goals while also reducing congestion and pollution.

The Metro DC Hispanic Contractors Association urges the committee to reject House Bill 48. Maryland should embrace the opportunities Maglev presents and ensure that such projects are developed in a way that promotes equity, sustainability, and economic growth. Hispanic contractors and small businesses are ready to contribute their skills and expertise to this vision for a more connected and prosperous Maryland.

Thank you for considering our perspective. We are eager to collaborate with policymakers and stakeholders to ensure this project benefits all Marylanders.

Sincerely,

José Sueiro
Executive Director
Metro DC Hispanic Contractors Association