

January 28, 2025

HB0048

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

RE: **TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB0048** – Railroad Companies - Condemnation Authority

Position: OPPOSED

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Business Clergy Partnership (MBCP) to share our opposition to HB0048 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.

The Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) held hearings to provide Baltimore Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) with a railroad franchise license in 2015. BWRR went through the State sanctioned process with the PSC, and the PSC received numerous supporting letters for granting franchise license and no letters or comments opposing. The PSC further stated that "The evidence in the record is sufficient to find that the transfer of the WBA franchise to facilitate the development and assist in acquiring the federal approvals necessary to build the DC - Baltimore segment of the SCMAGLEV is in the public convenience and necessity."

House Bill 0048 is unjustified and unwarranted legislation aimed at undermining and destroying a project that has brought over hundred and fifty million dollars to the state, has asked for no state funds, and has followed the PSC process to apply and be granted a railroad franchise with its associated rights as prescribed in the State of Maryland.

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. Major infrastructure projects are difficult enough to pursue without changing the rules or targeting such projects, like the Maglev, with anti-business restrictions.

Thus, we ask that you submit an unfavorable report on HB0048.

Sincerely,



Lisa Ellis, Director of Marketing & Communications -
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