

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

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in strong opposition to House Bill 400.

Last summer, I had the privilege of traveling to Tokyo, Japan, as part of a delegation of Black and Brown business leaders and civil rights advocates. Our mission was to explore the transformative economic opportunities associated with Northeast Maglev's \$4 billion commitment to Minority and Women-Owned Businesses (MWBs). Through this experience, I witnessed firsthand the profound economic impact that true high-speed rail can have on regional economies and historically marginalized communities.

The Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project embodies the kind of bold investment Maryland needs to drive inclusive economic growth. With a \$4 billion pledge to MWBs, this initiative presents a historic opportunity to empower local businesses—particularly those led by African Americans—while generating over 160,000 jobs and expanding pathways to prosperity. Beyond its economic potential, Maglev technology offers a sustainable, zero-emission transportation alternative. By reducing reliance on personal vehicles, it will alleviate traffic congestion and significantly improve air quality—critical benefits for urban communities disproportionately affected by pollution and environmental injustice.

Equally important, our communities deserve the opportunity to thoroughly evaluate all available information and future environmental studies before making an informed decision about the project's benefits and impacts. Prematurely shutting down this conversation would deprive Maryland residents of the ability to engage with the facts, assess the opportunities, and determine how high-speed rail can best serve their needs. House Bill 400 sends a discouraging message to businesses and industries considering Maryland for investment. Cutting off funding at this stage creates unnecessary barriers to progress and jeopardizes a transformative initiative capable of delivering significant economic, environmental, and social benefits. Maryland must not turn its back on opportunities that promote reinvestment, growth, and empowerment in communities that have long been overlooked.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue an unfavorable report on House Bill 400. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Anwar Young, Esq.
Young Law Group