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January 29, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair. Regina Boyce, Vice Chair
Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

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RE: Support HB400

As the Director for the Maryland Safety and Legislative Board for the Transportation Division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Worker's (SMART) and on behalf of our members I urge a favorable report for HB-400 - *State Finance – Prohibited Appropriations – Magnetic Levitation Transportation System.*

We are the largest rail labor union in North America. Our members in Maryland are employees of CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern, Canton Railroad, AMTRAK and MARC (Alstom and Amtrak). We work as conductors, engineers, switchmen, trainmen, utility persons and yardmasters. We operate freight and passenger trains that travel throughout the State of Maryland, the Northeast Corridor and the United States of America. SMART represents over 230,000 members throughout the country.

HB400 would prohibit the State and certain units and instrumentalities of the State from using any appropriation for a magnetic levitation transportation system in the State.

Our organization is opposed to the construction of any magnetic levitation system that would require local or state jurisdictions to contribute property or tax dollars for such a system.

Our current Amtrak and MARC rail systems, which by the way can meet the needs of rail travel between Washington and Baltimore, are in great need of investment to maintain and modernize their systems. With our current budget deficit, it makes no sense to divert much-needed dollars to a new system with cost estimates ranging from \$10 billion to as high as \$26.5 billion. Especially to a system that would only decrease travel time between these cities by approximately 15 minutes and undoubtedly mostly be used by a few residents who are in the upper income tax brackets.

At a time when income inequality as a result of the disparity in opportunities is so obvious, we don't need to exacerbate this problem by investing in an ultra-expensive unnecessary system. Maglev is to rail travel what the Concorde was to air travel, and we know how that ended.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our position on this matter.

Sincerely,

David Sr

David Pendleton Sr., Chairperson/Director
Maryland Safety & Legislative Board, LO-023
SMART Transportation Division