

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:

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to House Bill 48. 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 linked to Northeast Maglev's \$4 billion commitment to Minority and Women-Owned Businesses (MWBs). Through this experience, I witnessed firsthand the profound impact that true high-speed rail can have on regional economies and historically marginalized communities.

The Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project represents precisely the kind of bold investment Maryland needs to foster inclusive economic growth. With a \$4 billion pledge to MWBs, this initiative will create tangible opportunities for local businesses—particularly those led by African Americans—while generating over 160,000 jobs and opening new pathways to prosperity. Beyond its economic impact, Maglev technology offers a sustainable, zero-emission alternative to traditional transportation systems. 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.

Just as importantly, our communities deserve the opportunity to fully assess both the currently available information and future environmental studies to make informed decisions about the potential benefits and impacts of this project. Shutting down this conversation prematurely would deprive Maryland residents of the ability to engage with the facts, evaluate the opportunities, and determine how high-speed rail can best serve their needs.

House Bill 48 threatens to derail these vital advancements by obstructing the tools necessary to realize a project that addresses both economic and environmental inequities. Maryland must not turn its back on initiatives 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 48. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Anwar Young, Esq.
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