



February 14, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
The Honorable Regina Boyce, Vice Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
250 & 251 Taylor Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Testimony of Ray Baker on
HB 400 – State Finance Prohibited Appropriations Magnetic Levitation Transportation System
Position: UNFAVORABLE**

Thank you Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to HB 400.

My name is Ray Baker. I am the Maryland Director for the Baltimore-DC Building Trades (BDCBT). The BDCBT represents 28 construction trade unions across Maryland, Northern Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Combined, our trade unions represent more than 30,000 of skilled craft professionals in the construction industry.

The BDCBT strongly opposes HB 400. SCMAGLEV does not include any state financing, and it doesn't need it. Construction costs will be split among the Japanese government, the Central Japan Railway, and the U.S. government. Independent ridership and revenue studies validate the financial feasibility of the project, and revenues will offset operating and maintenance costs. Moreover, the federal government funded the environmental study through its Maglev Deployment Program, with matching funds from the private sector.

The BDCBT believes that the SCMAGLEV would transform the Northeast region by reducing travel times between New York City and Washington, DC to under one hour. The first phase would connect Washington, DC and Baltimore in just 15 minutes. At the same time, the project would provide much-needed job opportunities, including quality union construction jobs that will create a pathway to the middle class for Baltimore-Washington area residents. According to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), construction of the first phase alone would result in the creation of more than 160,000 regional jobs. Another benefit is that the project would take up to 16 million cars off the road, substantially reducing congestion and improving our region's air quality.

Finally and perhaps most importantly, HB 400 is a preemptive action to a problem that does not exist, and would ultimately only create future complications for our state's potential investment opportunities.

The BDCBT urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report on HB 400.

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