

---

# THE BALTIMORE TIMES

---

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 am Paris Brown, Publisher of **The Baltimore Times**. Our newspaper is a free community publication distributed to residents of Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Anne Arundel County. For over 40 years, **The Baltimore Times** has inspired, empowered, and informed our community about city and state issues that impact quality of life, while also sharing stories overlooked by mainstream media. We are dedicated to reporting on events and forming partnerships that enhance the lives of city and county residents. **The Baltimore Times** is committed to advocacy work that promotes economic development, health, housing, local businesses, and environmental issues. We believe that access to capital and opportunities for Black and minority-owned businesses are essential for the well-being of our community, as are the overall health and wealth of our residents. Additionally, **The Baltimore Times** actively creates awareness around local issues, and supports national initiatives that address policies that ensure the sustainability of local media outlets. We advocate for city and state initiatives that foster sustainability through increased advertising and tax credits for small businesses that advertise with local community news outlets.

House Bill 48 would prohibit an entity that owns or operates a railroad powered by a magnetic levitation (maglev) propulsion system from any condemnation authority afforded to all other railroad companies in the State. The Baltimore Times strongly opposes House Bill 48, which would eliminate the use of condemnation authority for the development of maglev transportation systems. This legislation not only threatens the progress of the Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project but also undermines Maryland's ability to execute critical infrastructure initiatives that are key to fostering economic growth, mobility, and equity.

As part of a delegation of Black and Brown business leaders and civil rights advocates, I had the privilege to travel to Tokyo last summer on a trip focused on learning about the significant minority business opportunities tied to Northeast Maglev's \$4 billion pledge to Minority and Women-Owned Businesses. This trip marks a crucial step in preparing the minority business community for active participation in a project that promises to revolutionize transportation through high-speed rail between Washington, DC, Baltimore, and eventually New York. With an intensive itinerary that included tours of manufacturing facilities, construction sites, and a ride on the Maglev at 311 mph, this experience provided valuable insights into how the \$10 billion infrastructure for the Maglev train project could shape the future of the Northeast Corridor and impact cities and local communities along the route.

One of the most impactful aspects of the Maglev project is its potential to make travel through one of the world's largest metropolises easy, safe, and convenient, while also serving as a catalyst for growth in various industry and business sectors. The potential impact on Baltimore City could be significant, leading to increased tourism and convention business from cities along the East Coast Corridor. Enhanced ease of travel to and from BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport will make the city more accessible, attracting more visitors and boosting the local economy. This ease of travel might also draw talent from other cities due to the improved commuting options, providing greater opportunities for businesses to attract additional skilled workers.

Denying the use of eminent domain for the SCMAGLEV sends the wrong message about Maryland's commitment to progress. It risks stalling a project that could provide widespread benefits for residents and businesses alike. For these reasons, The Baltimore Times urges the committee to issue an **unfavorable** report on House Bill 48 and preserve Maryland's ability to pursue transformative infrastructure projects that promote growth and opportunity for all.

Sincerely,

Paris Brown, Publisher  
The Baltimore Times