

HB48_SMART_Pendleton_FAV

Uploaded by: David Pendleton

Position: FAV

DAVID PENDELTON SR.
Chairperson/Director

TOM CAHILL
Vice Chairperson/Assistant
Director

BRITTANY GARRIS
Secretary



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January 29, 2025

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

REPRESENTATIVES

CUMBERLAND
Local 600
RANDY MARTZ

BRUNSWICK
Local 631
TOM CAHILL

EDMONSTON
Local 1470
BRITTANY GARRIS

BALTIMORE
Local 610
JOHN WALKER

Local 1949
JACOB STROMAN

RE: Support HB48

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-48 – *Railroad Companies – Condemnation Authority – Application*.

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 in the USA.

HB48 would prohibit a railroad that is powered by a magnetic levitation propulsion system from using railroad eminent domain powers to acquire private property in the State.

In 2015, the Baltimore Washington Rapid Rail acquired a defunct railroad company in Maryland that had been abandoned by the WB&A Electric Railway for nearly 80 years. The only logical reason for this is so that BWRR can utilize the legacy eminent domain powers that bygone railroad company has to take private property from the residents of Maryland who would refuse to cooperate with their agenda.

Our current Amtrak and MARC rail systems, which can meet the needs of rail travel between Washington DC, BWI Airport, and Baltimore City, 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 \$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 trains what the Concorde was to planes, and we know how that ended....badly.

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

Sincerely,

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

MOS HB0048 Condemnation Authority Mag-Lev.pdf

Uploaded by: Kurt Schwarz

Position: FAV



MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

January 28, 2025

Bill: <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2025RS/bills/hb/hb0048F.pdf>

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB0048—Railroad Companies—Condemnation Authority-Application

Position: Support SB0048

The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) strongly supports SB0048 and urges the Committee to issue a favorable report. This bill would alter the process of condemnation for railroad lines so that condemnation could not be used for any railroad powered by a magnetic levitation propulsion system (Mag-Lev).

MOS opposes the proposed Mag-Lev line between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, because it would destroy several hundreds of acres of forest on the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center or Patuxent Research Refuge, part of last large undeveloped green space between the two cities.

The proposed Mag-Lev line would do little to reduce road traffic between the cities, as the fares would be prohibitively expensive, and there would be only three stops. Funds will be better spent on improving existing rail corridors, which will benefit commuters, while preserving habitat.

We urge a favorable Committee Report from the Committee. North America has lost almost 30% of its birds since 1970.¹ Loss of habitat is one of the major causes of these declines. Mag-Lev will destroy acres of habitat, slice up the largest green space in Central Maryland, and do little to reduce traffic and associated air pollution. MOS asks the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB0055.

Sincerely,

¹ Rosenberg, Kenneth V. et al, Decline of the North American avifauna, Science, VOL 366, NO. 6451, 19 September 2019, https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.aaw1313?adobe_mc=MCORGID%3D242B6472541199F70A4C98A6%2540AdobeOrg%7CTS%3D1707754028

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kurt R. Schwarz', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kurt R. Schwarz
Conservation Chair Emeritus
Maryland Ornithological Society
www.mdbirds.org

HB0048 testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Laura Bonkosky

Position: FAV

January 28, 2025

Written Testimony in Favor of HB0048 – Railroad Companies - Condemnation Authority – Application

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

My name is Laura Bonkosky submitting written testimony as an individual. I am writing in support of HB0048, sponsored by Delegates Healey, Martinez, and Williams.

The issue of BWRR's transferred right of eminent domain and ability to condemn land is extremely complicated. The recent case brought by Stonewall and the Westport development in Baltimore against BWRR was subject to convoluted court maneuverings.

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) is the private developer intensively lobbying to build a proposed Superconducting Magnetic Levitation (SCMaglev) transit project. The issue of BWRR's transferred right of eminent domain and its ability to condemn land is complicated. BWRR contends that they acquired condemnation rights to the land when they were granted the franchise of the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railway, an American railroad that operated from 1899 until 1935 in central Maryland and Washington, D.C. Is the SCMaglev a traditional railroad as was the original franchisee?

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) is the private developer intensively lobbying to build the Superconducting Magnetic Levitation train project. The issue of BWRR's transferred right of eminent domain and ability to condemn land is extremely complicated.

The recent case brought by Stonewall and the Westport development in Baltimore against BWRR was subject to convoluted court maneuverings.

When BWRR's assertions were ruled against, it was stated by Stonewall's executive Ray Jackson that the contention that BWRR "acquired condemnation rights to the land" when it purchased the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railway franchise contained "a lot of factual inaccuracies."

The two parties finally resolved their court fights with a settlement for Stonewall to build the development and allocate a portion of the land to BWRR (should it get approval from the Federal Railroad Administration to move forward), which, as I understand it, avoided resolving the issue of BWRR's right of condemnation.

The right of BWRR's eminent domain and condemnation authority should be weighed carefully because the potential use of it hovers over the company's anticipated actions as they decide on their proposed final route through the heavily populated Northeast Corridor.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony favorable to HB0048, which I look forward to being moved out of committee.

Sincerely,

Laura Bonkosky
19 Ridge Rd, Unit T
Greenbelt, MD 20770
301-908-6899

HB0048 - Favorable - Railroad Companies - Condemna

Uploaded by: Rhonda Kranz

Position: FAV



Committee: Environment and Transportation
Testimony on: HB0048 – Railroad Companies - Condemnation Authority – Application
Organization: Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit
Submitting: Rhonda Kranz, President
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: January 30, 2025

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for accepting the Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit's (MCRT's) written testimony in support of HB0048. The MCRT evaluates transit projects for social equity, environmental impact, environmental justice, economic viability, and community accessibility. We represent a statewide coalition of communities, civic organizations, environmental groups, and residents. This bill will provide much needed protection to Maryland communities and citizens by establishing that certain authority of railroad companies to acquire property by condemnation does not apply to an entity that owns or operates a railroad powered by a magnetic levitation propulsion system; and generally relating to the condemnation authority of railroad companies.

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) is the private developer intensively lobbying to build a proposed Superconducting Magnetic Levitation (SCMaglev) transit project. The issue of BWRR's transferred right of eminent domain and its ability to condemn land is complicated. BWRR contends that they acquired condemnation rights to the land when they were granted the franchise of the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railway, an American railroad that operated from 1899 until 1935 in central Maryland and Washington, D.C. Is the SCMaglev a traditional railroad as was the original franchisee?

We contend that the SCMaglev is not a traditional railroad. It is a massive project that would run 36-40 miles from Washington, D.C., to Baltimore, with the only stop at BWI airport. According to BWRR, eight million people live in the Baltimore-Washington region. Unlike most commuter transit systems, the SCMaglev almost entirely excludes the populations along the route, 76 percent of which lies in environmental justice areas, where the bulk of the easements would occur. This population is in dire need of local transit for their daily rides to work, medical and other professional services, and other locations. They have no equivalent options, such as MARC or the Acela, unlike those who want to travel directly from Washington, D.C., to Baltimore, and can afford to purchase expensive tickets.

Approximately 75 percent of the proposed alignments would be below ground in tunnels approximately 46 feet in diameter that would run under schools, businesses, and homes. According to the MCRT's analysis of BWRR data presented in its Draft Environmental Impact Statement, easements would include over 1,100 property parcels in Maryland. In most cases, the easements would take land under properties. BWRR can claim that it will not impose impacts on property owners or property values, but this is not true. Vibrations 350 feet from the SCMaglev when in operation would impact the structure of buildings and sensitive electrical equipment, as well as have potential impacts on health.

The power of eminent domain is a legal tool typically used by governments to take property in the name of the "greater good" for the public, usually for public use. Of major concern is who determines the "greater good" when it comes to considering the rights of property owners along the routes currently proposed by BWRR. Those individuals could lose a portion of their land and possibly their houses. An issue of specific concern is that BWRR, via a contractor, will contact property owners along the proposed routes about BWRR's interest and intention of obtaining an easement to establish a right of way to tunnel underneath the property, which would greatly affect most of the designated properties. They would also bear the brunt of the negative effects of the construction and operations of the system.

The rights of BWRR's eminent domain and condemnation authority must be weighed carefully in consideration of the realistic benefits for public good in the heavily populated Northeast Corridor. Over 1,100 properties in Maryland could be affected should construction proceed to build a system that will not benefit our residents because it will have only three stops and be cost-prohibitive. Therefore, we urge a favorable vote for HB0048.

January 28.pdf

Uploaded by: Susan Barnett

Position: FAV

January 28, 2025

**Written Testimony in Favor of HB0048 – Railroad Companies -
Condemnation Authority – Application**

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and
Transportation Committee,

My name is Susan Barnett, submitting written testimony as an individual. I
am writing in support of HB0048, sponsored by Delegates Healey,
Martinez, and Williams.

The issue of BWRR's transferred right of eminent domain and ability to
condemn land is extremely complicated. The recent case brought by
Stonewall and the Westport development in Baltimore against BWRR was
subject to convoluted court maneuverings.

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) is the private developer
intensively lobbying to build a proposed Superconducting Magnetic
Levitation (SCMaglev) transit project. The issue of BWRR's transferred
right of eminent domain and its ability to condemn land is complicated.
BWRR contends that they acquired condemnation rights to the land when
they were granted the franchise of the Washington, Baltimore and
Annapolis Electric Railway, an American railroad that operated from 1899
until 1935 in central Maryland and Washington, D.C. Is the SCMaglev a
traditional railroad as was the original franchisee?

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) is the private developer
intensively lobbying to build the Superconducting Magnetic Levitation train
project. The issue of BWRR's transferred right of eminent domain and
ability to condemn land is extremely complicated.

The recent case brought by Stonewall and the Westport development in
Baltimore against BWRR was subject to convoluted court maneuverings.
When BWRR's assertions were ruled against, it was stated by Stonewall's
executive Ray Jackson that the contention that BWRR "acquired
condemnation rights to the land" when it purchased the Washington,
Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railway franchise contained "a lot of
factual inaccuracies."

The two parties finally resolved their court fights with a settlement for Stonewall to build the development and allocate a portion of the land to BWRR (should it get approval from the Federal Railroad Administration to move forward), which, as I understand it, avoided resolving the issue of BWRR's right of condemnation.

The right of BWRR's eminent domain and condemnation authority should be weighed carefully because the potential use of it hovers over the company's anticipated actions as they decide on their proposed final route through the heavily populated Northeast Corridor.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony favorable to HB0048, which I look forward to being moved out of committee.

Sincerely,

Susan Barnett

12 H Plateau Pl, Unit H, Greenbelt, MD

Tel: 443 388 2961

Favorable Testimony McCutchen - HB0048 - Railroad

Uploaded by: Susan McCutchen

Position: FAV

January 28, 2025

Written Testimony in Favor of HB0048 – Railroad Companies - Condemnation Authority – Application

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

My name is Susan McCutchen, a member of the Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit, submitting written testimony as an individual. I am writing in support of HB0048, sponsored by Delegates Healey, Martinez, and Williams.

An explicit example of BWRR's troubling claims of eminent domain and the right of property condemnation is recent developments in Baltimore, the destination at one end of the proposed SCMaglev routes. Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) is the private developer intensively lobbying to build the Superconducting Magnetic Levitation train project. The issue of BWRR's transferred right of eminent domain and ability to condemn land is extremely complicated. The recent case brought by Stonewall Capital, the firm behind the ONE Westport development in Baltimore, against BWRR was subject to convoluted court maneuverings. At one point, it was stated by Stonewall's executive Ray Jackson that the contention that BWRR "acquired condemnation rights to the land" when it purchased the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railway franchise contained "a lot of factual inaccuracies." In August 2021, Baltimore City Circuit Court Judge Kendra Y. Ausby agreed, ruling against and rejecting BWRR's arguments. In November 2023, the two parties resolved their issues with a court settlement for Stonewall to build the development, granting BWRR an easement on their property (that is, *if it gains approval from the Federal Railroad Administration to move forward with the project*). As I understand it, the settlement avoided resolving the issue of BWRR's right of condemnation.

The rights of BWRR's eminent domain and condemnation authority should be weighed carefully because the potential use of it hovers over the company's anticipated actions as they decide on their proposed final route through the heavily populated Northeast Corridor.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony favorable to HB0048, which I look forward to being moved out of committee.

Sincerely,

Susan R. McCutchen
5404 Spring Road, Bladensburg, Maryland
Tel: 301-699-9035

Written Testimony in Favor of HB0048 – Railroad Co

Uploaded by: Tom Taylor

Position: FAV

January 28, 2025

**Written Testimony in Favor of HB0048 – Railroad Companies -
Condemnation Authority – Application**

To: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

My name is Tom Taylor, and I am submitting written testimony as an individual. I am writing in support of HB0048, sponsored by Delegates Healey, Martinez, and Williams.

The issue of BWRR's transferred right of eminent domain and ability to condemn land is extremely complicated. The recent case brought by Stonewall and the Westport development in Baltimore against BWRR was subject to convoluted court maneuverings.

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) is the private developer intensively lobbying to build a proposed Superconducting Magnetic Levitation (SCMaglev) transit project. The issue of BWRR's transferred right of eminent domain and its ability to condemn land is complicated. BWRR contends that they acquired condemnation rights to the land when they were granted the franchise of the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railway, an American railroad that operated from 1899 until 1935 in central Maryland and Washington, D.C. Is the SCMaglev a traditional railroad as was the original franchisee?

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) is the private developer intensively lobbying to build the Superconducting Magnetic Levitation train project. The issue of BWRR's transferred right of eminent domain and ability to condemn land is extremely complicated.

The recent case brought by Stonewall and the Westport development in Baltimore against BWRR was subject to convoluted court maneuverings. When BWRR's assertions were ruled against, it was stated by Stonewall's executive Ray Jackson that the contention that BWRR "acquired condemnation rights to the land" when it purchased the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Electric Railway franchise contained "a lot of factual inaccuracies."

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The right of BWRR's eminent domain and condemnation authority should be weighed carefully because the potential use of it hovers over the company's anticipated actions as they decide on their proposed final route through the heavily populated Northeast Corridor.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony favorable to HB0048. I urge that HB0048 be given a favorable vote and moved out of committee.

Sincerely,

Tom Taylor
11-G Laurel Hill Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770
301-513-9524

Testimony Opposing Maryland House Bill 48_GWBCC.pd

Uploaded by: Aisha Bond

Position: UNF



Testimony Opposing Maryland House Bill 48

Presented by Aisha Bond, Esq. President/CEO, Greater Washington DC Black Chamber of Commerce

January 30, 2025

Chairperson Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and esteemed members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

I am Aisha Bond, President & CEO of the Greater Washington DC Black Chamber of Commerce (GWBCC). We are dedicated to promoting economic development and supporting Black-owned businesses in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony on behalf of GWBCC in opposition to House Bill 48, titled "Railroad Companies - Condemnation Authority - Application."

House Bill 48 seeks to exclude entities operating railroads powered by magnetic levitation propulsion systems from the authority to acquire property through condemnation.

While we understand the intent to address concerns related to property rights, we believe this bill could inadvertently hinder economic growth and infrastructure development that are vital to our community.

Impact on Economic Development

The introduction of advanced transportation technologies, such as magnetic levitation systems, presents significant opportunities for economic development. These projects can create jobs, stimulate local businesses, and enhance connectivity within the region. Restricting the necessary authority to acquire property for such developments may deter investment and stall projects that could benefit the communities we represent.

Equitable Infrastructure Advancement

Infrastructure projects have the potential to revitalize underserved areas, providing much-needed services and opportunities. By limiting the tools available to develop these projects, HB 48 could disproportionately affect Black-owned businesses and communities that would benefit from improved transportation infrastructure. It is crucial that legislation supports equitable development rather than creating barriers that may perpetuate existing disparities.



Commitment to Community Engagement

We advocate for a balanced approach that ensures property rights are respected while allowing for the advancement of critical infrastructure. This includes robust community engagement and transparent processes to address concerns and mitigate adverse impacts. We believe that with proper safeguards and inclusive dialogue, it is possible to achieve development goals that serve the public interest and protect individual rights.

In conclusion, the Greater Washington DC Black Chamber of Commerce respectfully opposes House Bill 48. We urge the committee to consider the broader implications of this legislation on economic development and equity within our communities. We recommend fostering policies that encourage innovation and infrastructure improvements, coupled with strong community engagement and protections.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aisha Bond".

Aisha Bond, Esq.

President/CEO

Greater Washington DC Black Chamber of Commerce

Anwar Young_HB 48 Opposition.pdf

Uploaded by: Anwar Young

Position: UNF

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 (MWBES). 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 MWBEs, 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.
Young Law Group

HB48_Matlock_UNF

Uploaded by: Colby Matlock, Sr.

Position: UNF



BREATH OF LIFE
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

January 30, 2025,

OPPOSE

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 Delegate Korman,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 48, which would hinder the development of the Baltimore-Washington Superconducting Maglev (SCMAGLEV) project. As a senior pastor and advocate for the citizens of the Greater Baltimore-Washington Area, I am deeply invested in initiatives that promote economic growth, environmental sustainability, and equitable access to transportation. The SCMAGLEV project represents a transformative opportunity for our region, and I urge you and the committee to reject HB 48 in favor of progress that benefits all Marylanders.

The Baltimore-Washington corridor is one of the most congested and economically vital regions in the United States. Our communities face daily struggles with traffic congestion, long commutes, and limited access to efficient public transit. The SCMAGLEV system would revolutionize transportation by providing a high-speed, environmentally friendly alternative that reduces commute times, alleviates road congestion, and decreases carbon emissions. As a faith leader, I am particularly concerned about ensuring that all citizens, regardless of socioeconomic background, have access to reliable, safe, and modern transportation. The SCMAGLEV project aligns with the need for forward-thinking infrastructure that prioritizes sustainability, efficiency, and equity. House Bill 48 threatens to stall this progress, keeping our region locked in outdated transportation models that disproportionately burden working families and underserved communities.

I respectfully urge you and your colleagues on the House Environment and Transportation Committee to oppose House Bill 48 and support the advancement of the SCMAGLEV project. By doing so, you will be endorsing a bold vision for Maryland's future—one that prioritizes economic opportunity, environmental responsibility, and quality of life for all residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dr. Colby A. Matlock, Sr

Breath of Life SDA Church

Cell: (302)260-1539

Email: DrMatlock@bolchurchmd.org

11310 Fort Washington Road, Fort Washington, MD 20744 • (301) 292-2100 •
www.bolchurchmd.org Colby Matlock Sr., Pastor

HB 48 DH Opposition_.pdf

Uploaded by: Deborah Harrington

Position: UNF

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 Deborah Harrington, a resident of Prince George's County and a certified Women and Minority Business Owner, writing to express my strong **opposition** to **House Bill 48**. This bill would prohibit entities operating maglev-powered railroads from utilizing condemnation authority—an essential tool afforded to all other railroad companies in the state. This proposal would end the opportunity in Maryland to develop a maglev transportation project, a critical infrastructure initiative that promises substantial economic, labor, and environmental benefits for Maryland, particularly for historically underserved communities.

The Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project presents a significant opportunity for Minority and Women-Owned Businesses in Maryland, particularly within Black communities. With a \$4 billion investment allocated specifically to these businesses, the project will directly create the jobs and construction opportunities that have been sorely needed in underserved communities. This initiative ensures that local businesses, especially those led by African Americans, will have access to the kinds of high-wage, sustainable employment opportunities that can help close longstanding economic gaps.

I had the privilege of experiencing the maglev train firsthand during a visit to Tokyo last summer, and I can attest to the transformative potential of this technology. The maglev train's efficiency, speed, and smooth, quiet operation represent the future of transportation. In Japan, maglev trains have dramatically reduced travel times and have become a key component of a sustainable and modern transportation network. These trains are not merely a technological innovation; they are an investment in the future of regional connectivity, environmental sustainability, and economic growth. Maryland must seize this opportunity to modernize its own transportation infrastructure, reduce congestion, and create thousands of jobs.

The construction of a maglev system in Maryland would generate thousands of high-wage jobs across various sectors, including construction, operations, and long-term maintenance. Local communities, particularly those in Prince George's County, would benefit significantly from this influx of employment opportunities, especially given the historical challenges faced by Black and Brown communities in accessing quality, high-paying jobs, and opportunities to become prime and subprime contractors. Moreover, this project would stimulate broader economic activity, creating demand for construction materials, manufacturing, and technological services, which would ripple through the local economy.

However, the restrictions imposed by HB 48 would severely hinder the development of this critical infrastructure. Condemnation authority ensures that large-scale rail projects, such as the maglev system, can acquire land efficiently and promptly, minimizing delays. Without this authority, the Northeast Maglev project—and potentially other future infrastructure initiatives—would face significant obstacles in developing

in Maryland, ultimately stalling prospective economic growth, reducing job opportunities, and delaying critical transportation improvements.

Furthermore, the environmental benefits of the maglev system cannot be overstated. These transit systems produce zero direct emissions, making them an ideal solution for reducing air pollution and advancing Maryland's climate goals. Given that communities of color are disproportionately impacted by pollution and environmental hazards, the development of a clean, efficient, and high-speed transportation system would significantly improve public health and contribute to environmental justice across the state.

I strongly urge this committee to vote **against House Bill 48**. The bill threatens the future of Maryland's economy, workforce, and environment by limiting the state's ability to efficiently acquire land for essential infrastructure projects. The maglev system represents a transformative opportunity for Maryland—a chance to modernize our transportation infrastructure, create high-quality jobs, and reduce our carbon footprint. It is essential that we do not let this bill set a dangerous precedent that could impede the progress of not just the maglev project, but other vital infrastructure initiatives in the future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Deborah Harrington, Founder and CEO
Energy Audits and Green Solutions

Baltimore Times HB 48 Opposition.pdf

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF

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

HB 48 Bi-County.pdf

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF



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:

The Bi-County Business Roundtable is an organization representing businesses throughout the state of Maryland. We are one of the largest roundtables in the state and surrounding Washington Metropolitan region. We have earned our well-deserved reputation as the “Voice of the voiceless and the go-to for small business.” It is our aggressive pursuit of a healthy economic climate for business and an improved quality of life for local residents. At the core of our mission is the goal of advancing the interests of small business and helping to create wealth for a vibrant climate in the state of Maryland.

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.

On behalf of the Bi-County Business Roundtable (BCBR), we strongly oppose House Bill 48, which would effectively block the development of the Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project. This legislation jeopardizes an economic engine that has the potential to drive growth, support small businesses, and create thousands of jobs in Prince George’s County and throughout Maryland.

The SCMAGLEV project represents a transformative opportunity for Maryland’s business community. Its \$4 billion commitment to minority- and women-owned businesses ensures that local businesses benefit directly from the project’s development. From construction and engineering to maintenance and operational roles, this initiative promises to create thousands of well-paying jobs across multiple sectors, directly contributing to workforce development in the region. Furthermore, the project will stimulate broader economic activity by creating demand for goods, services, and partnerships with local institutions, fostering innovation and community engagement.

BCBR values opportunities that strengthen the local economy and create avenues for small businesses to grow. The SCMAGLEV project is not just an infrastructure improvement; it’s a catalyst for long-term economic prosperity. The development of this high-speed rail system would enhance connectivity between metropolitan hubs, reduce congestion on major highways, and improve the efficiency of commerce and goods movement. This is particularly critical for Maryland, as our businesses need efficient infrastructure to remain competitive in the rapidly expanding Northeast Corridor.



House Bill 48 threatens to derail these opportunities before they even materialize. By blocking the SCMAGLEV project, Maryland would risk sending a message that it is not business-friendly or committed to fostering growth. This would stand in direct opposition to Governor Moore's economic development agenda and Maryland's broader goals of inclusivity and innovation.

For these reasons, the Bi-County Business Roundtable urges the committee to issue an **unfavorable** report on House Bill 48. Supporting transformative infrastructure projects like the SCMAGLEV is essential to ensuring the future growth and prosperity of Maryland's businesses and residents.

Sincerely,
Darryl Barnes
President
Bi-County Business Roundtable
Office: 301.437.0225

HB 48_Bulldog_UNF.pdf

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF



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:

Bulldog Distribution Trucking is a certified minority-owned small business based in Prince George's County, Maryland that specializes in supplying premium truck hauling material and construction services on heavy infrastructure projects in and around Maryland. We have been in business since 2010 and have grown from 1 truck to 20 trucks with a full administrative staff.

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.

Removing condemnation authority for maglev rail companies would make it harder to secure necessary land for constructing maglev transportation systems. This could lead to fewer projects being initiated or completed, directly reducing the demand for workers and contractors in the transportation construction sector within Maryland. At a time when our State's transportation budget has been and continues to be cut significantly, companies like ours are struggling with work.

The transportation construction community thrives on large-scale projects that require extensive planning, labor, and resources. Any legislation that restricts or complicates such developments can have a ripple effect, reducing opportunities, income, and advancement potential for those in the field. It's our understanding that they will need a lot of trucks during the construction phase. As I mentioned, we are a minority business that could offer our services to a project like this and greatly benefit. Please consider an unfavorable report on House Bill 48, which would greatly impact the ability of this project to move forward.

Thank you,

Miguel Lambert, CEO
Bulldog Distribution Trucking

MBCP_HB0048.pdf

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF

January 28, 2025

HB0048

Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB0048** – Railroad Companies - Condemnation Authority

Position: OPPOSED

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Business Clergy Partnership (MBCP) to share our opposition to HB0048 and our strong support for the Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) high-speed rail project (MAGLEV) that will connect Baltimore to Washington D.C. in 15 minutes. MBCP is a bipartisan organization with a mission to bridge the gaps between businesses, faith-based communities, elected officials and governments.

Our goal is to make a difference in every community throughout Maryland by changing the political climate through policy and advocacy to open doors for all. MBCP has led numerous successful campaigns that have produced real change throughout the state. We feel strongly about partnering with businesses, organizations, and activists that are committed to help producing change from within. A project like BWRR's signifies opportunities, education, and hope for our state in a time where opportunities are lacking. Thousands of jobs will be created in the region not only during the construction phase of the project but will also serve as a pathway to various employment fields and provide workforce training.

The Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) held hearings to provide Baltimore Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) with a railroad franchise license in 2015. BWRR went through the State sanctioned process with the PSC, and the PSC received numerous supporting letters for granting franchise license and no letters or comments opposing. The PSC further stated that "The evidence in the record is sufficient to find that the transfer of the WBA franchise to facilitate the development and assist in acquiring the federal approvals necessary to build the DC - Baltimore segment of the SCMAGLEV is in the public convenience and necessity."

House Bill 0048 is unjustified and unwarranted legislation aimed at undermining and destroying a project that has brought over hundred and fifty million dollars to the state, has asked for no state funds, and has followed the PSC process to apply and be granted a railroad franchise with its associated rights as prescribed in the State of Maryland.

Seeing as our mission is to serve as a proponent for opportunity and change for Maryland residents, this bill stands in the way of the very principles our organization is built on. Major infrastructure projects are difficult enough to pursue without changing the rules or targeting such projects, like the Maglev, with anti-business restrictions.

Thus, we ask that you submit an unfavorable report on HB0048.

Sincerely,



Lisa Ellis, Director of Marketing & Communications -
Maryland Business & Clergy Partnership
204 Washington Avenue,
La Plata, Maryland 20646
(301) 298-5447

pgcba hb0048.pdf

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF

January 28, 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:

The Prince George's Contractors and Business Association (PGCBA) has provided strong leadership and advocacy for issues that enhance the opportunity for small, women and minority businesses to exist and grow. PGCBA was established in 1989 and has 35 years of experience in fostering small and medium-sized, women and minority businesses. Our Mission is to assure that the businesses that we represent have a fair, equitable opportunity to create wealth and employ citizens within our communities. This includes access to vehicles that provide capital and resources.

Railroads have always been given condemnation authority to ensure their ability to operate consistently and safely. During the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) hearings to provide Baltimore Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) with a railroad franchise license, they received a multitude of comments supporting the franchise license with no letters or comments opposing.

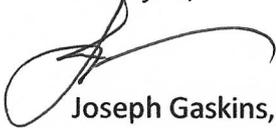
House Bill 48 would prohibit an entity that owns or operates a railroad powered by a magnetic levitation (maglev) propulsion system from any condemnation authority afforded to all other railroad companies in the State. The State of Maryland already has a process and framework in place to manage railroad franchise licenses, and their powers. Targeting and discriminating against one mode of transportation, after it has been legally reviewed and granted, is both anti-business and unwarranted.

PGCBA strongly opposes House Bill 48 because of the drastic impact this would have on the SCMAGLEV project currently in development and because the PSC order stated "The evidence in the record is sufficient to find that the transfer of the WBA franchise to facilitate the development and assist in acquiring the federal approvals necessary to build the DC - Baltimore segment of the SCMAGLEV is in the public convenience and necessity."

It is poor legislation, like this, that restricts and complicates such large infrastructure development projects which will have a ripple effect of reducing opportunities, jobs, incomes, and environmental benefits that the State sorely needs.

We appreciate you taking the time to consider our request for an **UNFAVORABLE** report on House Bill 48.

Thank you,



Joseph Gaskins, President & Chairman of the Board
Prince George's County Contractor's & Business Association
6710 Oxon Hill Road, Suite 210
Oxon Hill, MD 20745

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 0048_Hispanic Chambe

Uploaded by: Gerard Evans

Position: UNF



January 27, 2025

HB 0048

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
MD General Assembly
251 House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 0048 RAILROAD COMPANIES - CONDEMNATION AUTHORITY - APPLICATION

Dear Chairman Korman,

I am writing to outline our strong opposition to HB 0048.

The bill stands in direct opposition to the progress our organization supports and encourages. Our mission at the Chamber of Commerce is to ensure that county businesses can thrive, have access to a well-trained and educated workforce, and that county families have access to high-quality schools and safe neighborhoods.

Revoking the authority of eminent domain from a single railroad franchise - Baltimore Washington Rapid Rail – is short-sighted and antithetical to promoting innovation and development in our region. Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail was, in fact, lawfully granted the authority of eminent domain by the Maryland Public Service Commission in October 2015, after review, public notice, and hearing, an indication of the support this franchise had at the time and continues to receive from a majority of Marylanders today.

While our organization focuses on the needs of all Maryland County residents and businesses, the Baltimore-Washington Maglev project represents benefits for more than just our county. Once the project starts construction, residents throughout the region will benefit from new job and business opportunities, increased community growth, innovative development opportunities, and a healthier environment. With this incredible transportation technology, we can reach the future we've envisioned for ourselves with less pollution, traffic, more efficient transportation and transit-oriented development.

This bill is an attempt to prevent a viable, safe, and efficient transportation technology option that will provide opportunities for many. We recommend that the Maryland Legislature stand on the side of progress and innovation and once again give this bill an unfavorable report, opening the door to growth and development for millions across the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marco V. Ávila, P.E." with a horizontal line underneath.

Marco V. Ávila, P.E.

Chairman of the Board & President/CEO
Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
chair@mdhcc.org - 443-519-6909

HB48_BWRR testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Ian Rainey

Position: UNF

January 30, 2025

HB0048

House Environment and Transportation Committee
Maryland General Assembly
251 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB0048—RAILROAD COMPANIES –
CONDEMNATION AUTHORITY – APPLICATION**

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ian Rainey, and I am the Senior Vice President of Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR). I appear before you today to convey our strong opposition to HB0048.

HB0048 seeks to remove the power of eminent domain from a single franchised railroad, BWRR.

Eminent domain statutes have long been recognized to provide an orderly process which protects landowners in receiving fair value for their property. Eminent domain is used sparingly as a last resort. It is limited in Maryland law and elsewhere to franchised utilities (electric, gas, telephone, water and yes, railroads) as well as the government itself.

Eminent domain has been used by the federal government, the state government, municipalities, as well as private entities when they are authorized, to exercise the essential functions of a public character for the betterment of our state and country. Without eminent domain we would not have major airports, railroads, or highways.

HB0048 is designed to circumvent the administrative processes put in place whereby franchise authority (and hence eminent domain authority) is granted by the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) after review, public notice, and hearing. BWRR undertook this public process, which resulted in the granting of a railroad franchise by the PSC in November 2015. In granting the railroad franchise, the PSC found that "...the construction and operation of the SCMAGLEV between Baltimore and Washington, DC will result in substantial economic and social benefits to the State and Baltimore and be consistent with the State's environmental laws and policies enacted or adopted to reduce harmful emissions for cleaner air and address the causes of climate change." Further, the PSC found that awarding the franchise was in the public convenience and necessity.

HB0048 is asking the legislature, without justification, to step in and simply change the law for a single project and franchisee, thus undermining the entire administrative process undertaken by the PSC.

BWRR is committed to working with landowners and communities in order to minimize impacts of the proposed SCMAGLEV project. Indeed, a route has been developed that would result in no takings of residential homes along the alignment.



Baltimore Office
6 South Gay Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
(443) 759-8360

Removal of the eminent domain authority provided under Maryland law and regulated by the PSC would be tantamount to stopping the SCMAGLEV project or any future use of magnetic levitation transportation technology in the future. There is no evidence of harm that would warrant such an action.

BWRR believes it is essential to let the normal regulatory and legal processes in place work and avoid setting a precedent of upsetting current laws, not to address a problem, but to single out a specific project for unfavorable treatment.

We strongly recommend that HB0048 be provided a negative report.

Sincerely,

Ian Rainey
Senior Vice President

Metro DC Hispanic Contractors Association_HB 48 Op

Uploaded by: Jose Sueiro

Position: UNF



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:

My name is José Sueiro, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Metro DC Hispanic Contractors Association to express our opposition to House Bill 48, which prohibits entities operating maglev-powered railroads from utilizing condemnation authority—an essential tool afforded to all other railroad companies in the state.

As an organization dedicated to empowering Hispanic contractors and advancing equitable opportunities for minority-owned businesses, we believe that HB 48 would eliminate significant economic and professional opportunities for the small business community, while also hindering Maryland's progress toward innovative transportation solutions.

Economic Opportunities for Minority-Owned Businesses

The Maglev project represents a major infrastructure undertaking that would provide countless opportunities for Hispanic contractors and other small business owners to participate in and benefit from public projects. This includes:

- **Subcontracting Opportunities:** Large-scale infrastructure projects like Maglev rely heavily on subcontractors for a variety of services, from construction and electrical work to landscaping and maintenance. Hispanic contractors in Maryland could be well-positioned to secure these contracts, fostering economic growth within their communities.
- **Workforce Development:** Projects of this scale create jobs across multiple industries, providing high-quality employment and training opportunities for Maryland's skilled labor force, including the Hispanic community. For many, these projects are pathways to economic stability and upward mobility.

Strengthening Maryland's Infrastructure and Economy

The Maglev system is not just a transportation project—it is a transformative initiative that could modernize Maryland's infrastructure, making it a leader in efficient, high-speed transportation. This would enhance connectivity between economic hubs, reduce travel times, and increase the region's competitiveness on a national scale. The ripple effects of such a project would extend to small businesses, service providers, and local communities.

Equity and Inclusion Concerns

Maryland has made significant strides in promoting diversity and inclusion in state-funded projects. By barring condemnation authority for Maglev, HB 48 would undercut these efforts, depriving Hispanic and other minority-owned businesses of access to contracts and resources they need to grow and thrive. These businesses are critical to Maryland's economy, and their exclusion from such an impactful initiative would perpetuate systemic disparities.

Environmental Benefits

Opponents of Maglev have raised environmental concerns, but it is important to acknowledge the long-term benefits of this technology. Maglev transportation is highly energy-efficient, produces minimal emissions, and offers a sustainable alternative to traditional modes of transport. For a state like Maryland, which prioritizes environmental stewardship, Maglev could support its climate goals while also reducing congestion and pollution.

The Metro DC Hispanic Contractors Association urges the committee to reject House Bill 48. Maryland should embrace the opportunities Maglev presents and ensure that such projects are developed in a way that promotes equity, sustainability, and economic growth. Hispanic contractors and small businesses are ready to contribute their skills and expertise to this vision for a more connected and prosperous Maryland.

Thank you for considering our perspective. We are eager to collaborate with policymakers and stakeholders to ensure this project benefits all Marylanders.

Sincerely,

José Sueiro
Executive Director
Metro DC Hispanic Contractors Association

Carpenters_HB 48 Opposition.pdf

Uploaded by: Lamar Mutts

Position: UNF

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:

The Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EAS Carpenters Union), strives to be on equity with employers, establish shorter workdays and increase pay for the work provided. Most importantly, they want to spread their work among as many members as possible. EAS Carpenters has made great advances throughout North America and has established itself as one of the nation's largest, strongest and most respected unions. Today, we have over 532,000 members, representing 872 locals.

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. By restricting the ability to efficiently acquire property, this bill effectively cancels the development of projects like maglev, cutting off a vital source of job creation and economic growth for our state.

We recognize the transformative potential of large-scale infrastructure projects to provide substantial labor opportunities. The construction and development of a high-speed maglev system would generate thousands of good-paying jobs for carpenters, construction workers, and other trades, while the system's long-term maintenance and operations would provide sustained employment opportunities for years to come. Additionally, such projects stimulate broader economic activity, creating demand for local goods and services that indirectly benefit workers and their communities.

House Bill 48 not only jeopardizes the immediate labor opportunities tied to the maglev project but also sets a damaging precedent that could hinder future infrastructure investments. Large-scale projects often require condemnation authority to streamline land acquisition and ensure timely completion. By undermining this authority, the bill sends a clear message that Maryland is unwilling to invest in the kinds of transformative infrastructure initiatives that directly benefit workers and drive economic growth.

We strongly urge the committee to reject House Bill 48 and instead support innovative projects that uplift Maryland's labor force and contribute to a thriving economy. For the sake of Maryland's workers, families, and communities, we ask for an **unfavorable** report on this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Lamar Mutts, Council Representative
Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters

HB 48_MTBMA_UNF.pdf

Uploaded by: Michael Sakata

Position: UNF



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:

The Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association (“MTBMA”) has been and continues to serve as the voice for Maryland’s construction transportation industry since 1932. Our association is comprised of 200 members. MTBMA encourages, develops, and protects the prestige of the transportation construction and materials industry in Maryland by establishing and maintaining respected relationships with federal, state, and local public officials. We proactively work with regulatory agencies and governing bodies to represent the interests of the transportation industry and advocate for adequate state and federal funding for Maryland’s multimodal transportation system.

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.

MTBMA strongly opposes House Bill 48 because of the drastic impact this would have on the SCMAGLEV project currently in development in the region. Railroads have always been given condemnation authority to ensure their ability to operate consistently and safely. In fact, during the hearings to provide Baltimore Washington Rapid Rail with a railroad franchise license, the Public Service Commission received a multitude of comments supporting the franchise license with no letters or comments opposing the license.

Removing condemnation authority for maglev rail companies would make it harder to secure necessary land for constructing maglev transportation systems. This could lead to fewer projects being initiated or completed, directly reducing the demand for workers and contractors in the transportation construction sector within Maryland. At a time when our State’s transportation budget has been and continues to be cut significantly, our member companies are hurting for work. Many, who are based in Maryland, now do more work in other states. Maglev rail systems represent cutting-edge transportation technology. Their construction requires specialized skills and training, providing a pathway for workers to engage in innovative and technically advanced projects. If such projects are stalled or canceled, the transportation construction community might lose the opportunity to advance skills and expertise in emerging technologies. The transportation construction community thrives on large-scale projects that require extensive planning, labor, and resources. Any legislation that restricts or complicates such developments can have a ripple effect, reducing opportunities, income, and advancement potential for those in the field.

We appreciate you taking the time to consider our request for an **UNFAVORABLE** report on House Bill 48.

Thank you,

Michael Sakata
President and CEO
Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association

HB 48 Ray Baker Baltimore-DC Building Trades (UNFA

Uploaded by: Ray Baker

Position: UNF



January 30, 2025

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

**Testimony of Ray Baker, Maryland Director, Baltimore-DC Building Trades
on HB 48: Railroad Companies - Condemnation Authority - Application
Position: UNFAVORABLE**

Thank you Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee for the opportunity to offer testimony on HB 48.

My name is Ray Baker. I am the Maryland Director of the Baltimore-DC Building Trades (BDCBT). The BDCBT's 28 affiliates represent more than 30,000 union construction workers across Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

BDCBT strongly opposes HB 48. It is an attempt to stop the Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project. This legislation jeopardizes an economic engine that has the potential to drive growth, support small businesses, and create thousands of jobs throughout Maryland. Support for this bill would also establish a precedent that limits the ability to execute large-scale infrastructure projects, which often involve condemnation authority. This would make it more challenging to pursue future infrastructure projects that benefit workers.

As dedicated advocates for organized labor and reliable infrastructure projects, we know firsthand the potential that investments in advanced technology, such as the SCMAGLEV, can hold. These projects provide significant labor opportunities, including construction jobs, operational roles, and long-term maintenance work.

Projects of this magnitude and dedication do not come around often. The development of a MAGLEV system would stimulate broader economic activity, benefiting local businesses and communities. Without the ability to streamline land acquisition through condemnation, these economic benefits might not materialize, affecting labor indirectly through reduced demand for local goods and services.

BDCBT urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report on HB 48.

Ray Baker
Maryland Director, BDCBT
RBaker@BDCBT.org
410.585.7862

HB 48 IBEW Opposition.pdf

Uploaded by: Rico Albacarys

Position: UNF

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS - LOCAL UNION No. 24

AFFILIATED WITH:

Baltimore-D.C. Metro Building Trades Council - AFL-CIO
Baltimore Port Council
Baltimore Metro Council - AFL-CIO
Central MD Labor Council - AFL-CIO
Del-Mar-Va Labor Council - AFL-CIO
Maryland State - D.C. - AFL-CIO
National Safety Council



C. SAMUEL CURRERI, President
DAVID W. SPRINGHAM, JR., Recording Secretary
JEROME T. MILLER, Financial Secretary
MICHAEL J. MCHALE, Business Manager

OFFICE:
2701 W. PATAPSCO AVENUE
SUITE 200

AFL-CIO-CLC

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21230

Phone: 410-247-5511

FAX: 410-536-4338

Written Testimony of
Rico Albacarys, Assistant Business Agent, IBEW LOCAL 24
Before the House Environment and Transportation Committee On
HB 48 Railroad Companies - Condemnation Authority - Application

Opposed

January 28, 2025

Chairman Korman and Committee Members,

As a member and employee of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 24 in Baltimore, I am writing to express our strong **opposition to HB 48**. This bill seeks to block the Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project, a transformative initiative with the potential to fuel Maryland's economic growth, create thousands of well-paying jobs, and support businesses throughout the state.

By restricting the use of condemnation authority, this legislation would not only hinder the SCMAGLEV project but also set a troubling precedent for future large-scale infrastructure efforts. Such restrictions would make it far more difficult to implement the kinds of projects that deliver meaningful benefits to workers and communities alike.

We urge the committee to carefully consider these implications and issue an **unfavorable report on HB 48**. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Rico Albacarys
Assistant Business Agent
IBEW Local 24

Aaron Bast_Iron Workers Local 5_HB48_UNFAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Roger Manno

Position: UNF



TESTIMONY OF AARON BAST, BUSINESS MANAGER AND FINANCIAL
SECRETARY TREASURER, IRON WORKERS LOCAL 5
BEFORE THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
IN OPPOSITION TO HB48

Dear Chair Korman and members of the committee,

As Business Manager / Financial secretary Treasurer of Iron Workers Local 5, representing thousands of skilled union ironworkers across the Mid-Atlantic, I write to strongly oppose HB 48, which would restrict the condemnation authority for the Maglev train project, a transformative infrastructure initiative poised to bring substantial economic and employment benefits to Maryland.

The Maglev train project is a crucial investment in Maryland's future, offering clean, efficient, and sustainable transportation between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. It will significantly reduce congestion, lower emissions, and provide Marylanders with a state-of-the-art transit option. More than just a transportation solution, Maglev will serve as an economic catalyst, generating thousands of high-quality union jobs, supporting working families, and bolstering local economies.

The Maglev project will create thousands of union construction jobs, providing fair wages, benefits, and training opportunities through registered apprenticeship programs. These jobs offer a pathway to the middle class and will help develop a highly skilled workforce ready to meet the demands of cutting-edge infrastructure projects.

Iron Workers Local 5 is committed to ensuring that our members are at the forefront of building this transformative project, which promises to provide long-term employment and career advancement opportunities while maintaining the highest safety and quality standards.

Beyond job creation, the Maglev project will attract significant private investment, stimulate local businesses, and support economic growth throughout the region. Enhanced transportation options will allow Marylanders to access more job opportunities, reduce commute times, and improve quality of life.

Furthermore, the Maglev system aligns with Maryland's climate goals by offering a sustainable alternative to traditional transportation, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, and contributing to cleaner air and a healthier environment for future generations.

Iron Workers Local 5 urges the committee to reject HB 48, which would undermine the progress and potential of this vital infrastructure project. The Maglev train system represents a generational opportunity to drive economic growth, create good union jobs, and enhance Maryland's transportation network. We respectfully request an unfavorable report on HB 48 and encourage lawmakers to support policies that promote job creation and sustainable infrastructure.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Aaron Bast
Business Manager and Financial Secretary Treasurer
Iron Workers Local 5

M&A_Mungu Sanchez_EASRCC Carpenters_testimony_HB48

Uploaded by: Roger Manno

Position: UNF



Eastern Atlantic States REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

8500 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772 | Phone: 301-735-6660 | EASCARPENTERS.ORG

Testimony of Mungu Sanchez of the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC)

In Opposition to HB 48

House Environment and Transportation Committee

Dear Chair Korman and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC), representing thousands of union carpenters across the Mid-Atlantic region, I write to express our strong opposition to HB 48, which seeks to restrict the condemnation authority for the Maglev train project—a transformative infrastructure initiative that will provide immense benefits to Maryland’s economy, workforce, and environment.

The Maglev train project offers a groundbreaking transportation solution, delivering clean, efficient, and sustainable transit between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. It will significantly reduce traffic congestion, cut emissions, and create economic opportunities that extend beyond transportation. This project is about more than just moving people; it’s about creating thousands of good-paying, union jobs that will provide long-term benefits to working families and communities across the state.

The Maglev project will bring thousands of high-quality union carpentry jobs, ensuring fair wages, comprehensive benefits, and career-building apprenticeship programs. These opportunities provide clear pathways to stable, middle-class careers and support Maryland’s efforts to maintain a skilled workforce for future infrastructure projects.

EASRCC stands ready to contribute our expertise in building the essential components of the Maglev system, ensuring the project is completed with the highest safety and craftsmanship standards.

The Maglev project is poised to inject billions into the local economy, generating new opportunities for businesses, workers, and communities alike. The improved transportation network will expand job access, reduce commute times, and support regional economic growth.

Moreover, the project aligns with Maryland’s clean energy goals by offering an environmentally friendly alternative to traditional transportation systems, helping to combat climate change and improve air quality.

For these reasons, the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters urges the committee to reject HB 48, which threatens to halt an essential infrastructure project

and its associated economic and workforce benefits. The Maglev train system represents an unparalleled opportunity to drive sustainable economic growth and create thousands of high-quality union jobs.

We respectfully request an unfavorable report on HB 48 and urge lawmakers to support policies that prioritize job creation and sustainable infrastructure.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mungu Sanchez

Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC)

Patriots Tech Center HB 48 Opposition_.pdf

Uploaded by: Thurman Jones

Position: UNF



Patriots Technology Training Center
5800 Martin Luther King Jr. Highway
Seat Pleasant, MD 20743

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:

Patriots Technology Training Center strongly opposes House Bill 48, which seeks to restrict the use of condemnation authority for the development of magnetic levitation (maglev) transportation systems. This bill targets specifically the Baltimore-Washington SCMAGLEV project, an initiative that offers a vital opportunity to inspire the next generation of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) leaders and foster economic growth in Maryland.

For 22 years Patriots' mission has been "empowering students through technology." Our goal is to increase the number of 5th to 12th grade students entering into STEM, ultimately leading to a college education and career paths in these fields. Our various programs, camps, seminars, and activities serve to introduce youth to tomorrow's careers.

The SCMAGLEV project represents a rare chance to create high-quality STEM jobs and provide young people, especially minorities and women, with career paths in advanced technology fields. By removing the tools needed to acquire property efficiently, House Bill 48 would halt this transformative project and prevent Maryland from cultivating innovative skills among its youth. Eminent domain is critical to ensuring that projects with widespread public benefits, like SCMAGLEV, can proceed without unnecessary delays or barriers.

As an organization committed to promoting STEM education and workforce development, we recognize the potential for projects like SCMAGLEV to inspire and empower Maryland's youth. This initiative would connect students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other institutions to cutting-edge career opportunities in engineering, technology, and infrastructure development. Denying this project the chance to move forward risks exacerbating the trend of our best and brightest Maryland educated professionals leaving the state in search of opportunities elsewhere.

House Bill 48 also undermines Maryland's ability to lead in sustainable transportation solutions. Maglev technology not only provides a cleaner, more efficient transit option but also demonstrates Maryland's commitment to innovation and environmental stewardship. By restricting the tools necessary to advance projects like SCMAGLEV, this legislation sends a discouraging message to industries and communities looking to invest in the state's future.

For these reasons, Patriots Technology Training Center urges the committee to issue an unfavorable report on House Bill 48. The youth of Maryland, and the future of innovation in our state, are counting on your decision.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Thurman Jones,
President
Patriots Technology Training Center