

March 6, 2026

**Written Testimony in Favor of HB1360** – Maryland Public Ethics Law – Regulated Lobbyists – Reporting Requirements

Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and Members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee,

My name is Susan McCutchen. I am writing in support of HB1360, sponsored by Delegates Lehman, Ruth, Stewart, Terrasa, and Wu.

*This bill addresses: Altering the dates by which a regulated lobbyist must file a certain report to the State Ethics Commission; and altering the contents of the report to include a list of each matter on which the regulated lobbyist performed lobbying activity, a description of the lobbyist's position on each matter, and each bill number or a description of each legislative action on which the lobbyist performed lobbying activity.*

I learned over the past several years, while working within the community as an advocate who opposed the Superconducting Magnetic Levitation transit project, about the pervasive and unregulated financial and political persuasion of lobbyists. As an active member of the Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit, allying with many supportive elected and other officials, we fought mightily to bring about the cancellation of the project. We consistently ran into both open and less-than-transparent actions by monied Northeast Maglev lobbyists who attempted to persuade legislators and other officials to support the project through various approaches and different devices. Had we not been persistent and alert for leads from a variety of sources and been immediately reactive, our arguments would not have had a hearing due to the preponderance of lobbyists cajoling and coercing decisionmakers through sometimes surreptitious methods.

Money and its power and influence spawn paid lobbyists. While I realize many factors must be considered for every piece of legislation in our representative government, the playing field needs to be more level so that all voices and viewpoints can be heard. Transactions by those with the most access to elected and other officials must be more transparent to allow this to happen.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony favorable to HB1360, which I look forward to moving out of committee.

Sincerely,

*Susan R. McCutchen*

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