

February 16, 2021

TO: Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chair &
The Environment and Transportation Committee
FROM: Diana E. McFadden

SUBJECT: LATE TESTIMONY on HB0704

Please support HB 0704, in order to protect public lands, ecosystems, and other green spaces, from construction of a proposed Maglev rail within two miles of such lands and property.

I have just learned that HB 0704 had a first hearing on February 11. With many commitments in my own life, I was not aware of the hearing at the time the public was notified. I know that most people are especially preoccupied now, so it is easy to miss hearings. Between that, and the aggressive promotion of the Maglev, support is likely to be artificially skewed in favor of this project, and against HB0704.

The Maglev will offer costly transit to a few, and diminish quality of life in surrounding communities.

This project would threaten nearby ecosystems, including wetlands, the protected Greenbelt Forest Preserve, the Patuxent Wildlife Research Refuge, and National Parklands. The additional noise resulting from Maglev would further disturb the peace and quiet in the region, already tenuous.

Existing development and sprawl make preservation of ecosystems and forests more crucial than ever.

Humans, along with fauna and flora, rely on forests, meadows and wetlands, for sanity as well as physical health, in the face of water, air, and maddening noise pollution. Furthermore, citizens here **fought for decades** to protect the Greenbelt Forest Preserve from development. They sacrificed. They worked hard, with educated, diligent, and passionate determination.

It is not just a matter of passion, but of mental and physical health as well. The forest offers peace, sanctuary, relief and recovery. It provides a buffer from the intrusive noise of traffic and loud motors, protecting our homes and communities as well.

Now...Maglev, with slick advertising and strategic publicity, threatens the lands that so many love, and have struggled to protect.

Maintenance and improvement of **existing** passenger rail service would better serve thousands more people, at lower cost, with less or no damage to the environment.

Your support of HB 0704 will help to protect the lands, communities, and welfare of thousands. This in turn will promote loyalty, pride, peace and gratitude in our diverse, beautiful State, as a place to live by choice, and enjoy, for life.

Thank you for your service, and for looking out for us. I am especially grateful at this time.

Best Regards,
Diana E. McFadden
Greenbelt, Maryland