

Written and Oral Testimony in Support of HB0704  
Land Use - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System Siting  
(Maryland Stop the Maglev Act of 2021)

February 11, 2021

Good afternoon Chair Barve and members of the Committee on Environment and Transportation,

My name is Susan McCutchen, Community Liaison, Bladensburg Citizens Against the SCMaglev and Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit. I am submitting this written testimony in support of HB0704 Land Use - Magnetic Levitation Transportation System Siting (Maryland Stop the Maglev Act of 2021) in addition to my oral testimony.

I support this bill because the siting proposed for this transportation project will irrevocably impinge on valuable and protected property.

- Many federal agencies and national assets are located along the proposed routes. It is important to retain our carefully nurtured natural spaces and reserves, a dwindling resource along this corridor, not only for the use of local, statewide, national, and international researchers, but for the health, welfare, and quality of life of our residents.
- There are numerous issues of social equity and environmental justice for our multicultural, multiracial communities along the Northeast Corridor. Our modest- and low-income communities are regarded by transit project developers as places where anything obtrusive can be built without the same careful regard as would be given to less diverse, upscale communities that would not allow destructive incursions into their neighborhoods.

In addition, there are many concerns about the SCMaglev that must be considered.

- This is not mass transit for Prince George's County nor would it alleviate the local commuter traffic situation and take vehicles off the road, as touted.
- There are issues such as the physical inaccessibility of the train for residents (bypasses Prince George's County) and the prohibitive cost to ride it as a regular commuter option.
- The safety of the system itself and the Rule of Particular Applicability have not been seriously and sufficiently addressed in a timely manner.
- Throughout this process, there has been a lack of transparency, e.g., about how construction costs and ridership are calculated and substantiation of the project's claims as being a major source of ongoing, good-paying jobs that would benefit the residents of the county.
- Of major practical importance is economic viability, considering the enormous costs that would eventually accrue to the taxpayers with the inevitable cost overruns during construction and low anticipated ridership, creating a situation where the private entity would be unable to offset those costs, even with partial Japanese funding. While the SCMaglev project is not a designated P3, it would function similarly when faced with these challenges.

More suitable alternative transit solutions must be found through discussion and coordination among state and county project planners, elected officials, and the public at the early development stages, such that the full context and ramifications of proposed projects can be considered up front in a transparent process.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide my comments on HB0704.

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