



Committee: Environment & Transportation
Testimony on: HB 0063- State Finance- Prohibited Appropriations-
Magnetic Levitation Transportation System
Sponsor: Delegate Williams
Organization: Greenbelt Climate Action Network
Person Submitting: Lore Rosenthal, Program Coordinator
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 12, 2021

Dear Delegates of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

The Greenbelt Climate Action Network **supports HB 0063** (Prohibited Appropriations-Magnetic Levitation Transportation System). As an organization that educates residents about Climate Change and how to transform their behavior to be more sustainable, GCAN strongly supports the No Build Option for Maglev and therefore, also supports the prohibition of funds for this ill-conceived and environmentally devastating project. We believe there are more high value and more equitable transportation projects in which to invest. We support projects that would provide a train system most residents can afford to ride, and that won't destroy the health and quality of life in our communities.

The Patuxent Research Refuge and the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center harbor great biodiversity and provide \$35 million of ecosystem services per year (MD DNR's Greenprint mapping service). Intact ecosystems are so rare, and offer our best defense against Climate Change---their role in sequestering large amounts of carbon is well documented. Maglev's proposed 200-acre trainyard will destroy and degrade these centers of scientific research, and disrupt the ecosystem services they provide. In addition, ¼ of the Greenbelt Forest Preserve will be destroyed, along with other natural areas along Maglev's route. We need more initiatives to sequester carbon if we are to mediate the worst effects of Climate Change, not more deforestation and degradation of our highest quality habitats.

In an article "*Would the Proposed Maglev Increase Greenhouse Gas Emissions?*" (<https://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/prince-georges/blog/2020/12/would-proposed-baltimore-washington-maglev-increase-greenhouse>) atmospheric scientist at NASA, Owen Kelly, tells us to take a close look at the Maglev, because it will actually increase GHG emissions, contrary to the claims of what Baltimore Rapid Rail and NE Maglev are saying, and for which they have not provided data.

Carol Park, a senior policy analyst for the MD Public Policy Institute noted that “though the project (Maglev) purports to be a private effort, high-speed train projects are generally magnets of questionable government subsidies.” As an example, using California’s bullet train, the original cost estimate was \$6 billion, but has surged to \$10.6 billion. “If we apply this rate of cost overrun to Maglev, we can realistically expect the project to cost \$17.6 billion to \$26.5 billion.” Tax dollars will definitely be needed for Maglev. And they will come from far higher priority state and national infrastructure projects.

Please support HB0063 and prohibit appropriations for this transportation boondoggle that is being expedited before its safety is proven, that has failed to produce substantive environmental justice, ridership, traffic reduction, or emissions data. What we do know is that communities along the line will suffer immense disruption---destruction of homes and businesses, vibration, noise, increased diesel traffic, potential electromagnetic field exposure and dangerous emissions from the tunnel sections. **Please do not fund the Maglev.**

Thank you,

Lore Rosenthal, Program Coordinator
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