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Judiciary Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 12, 2021

The Honorable Delegate Kumar P. Barve

Chairman of the House Environment & Transportation Committee

6 Bladen Street, Room 251

Annapolis, MD 21401

House Bill 63

Good Afternoon, Chairman Barve and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee as well as members of the Appropriations Committee. I am Delegate Williams and I am **testifying in favor of House Bill 63**.

I know that you are familiar with the budget as well as the transportation needs of our State. As stewards of the taxes that our constituents pay, we strive to ensure that the funds appropriated reflect our highest priorities as a State. The COVID crisis of 2020 has drastically altered the way we need to look at our spending as a State—we need to get our priorities in order. Utilizing State money for the MAGLEV train cannot be a priority when there are small businesses closing and families struggling because of the financial crisis.

I am here today talking to you about the MAGLEV project. Opponents of my bill state that Central Japan Railway Company (CJRC) is providing the funding for the construction of this project. It is not my intention to kill the MAGLEV. In fact, any comment about this bill killing the MAGLEV project runs in complete contradiction to what they have stated about the funding for this project. You cannot say that this is a NIMBY reaction when you have residents in multiple districts, almost 1/3 of the state expressing concerns about this project.

If the Northeast Maglev wishes to show that they are truly concerned about the communities in which this project will impact, then they should stand with me in support of this legislation. However, instead they wish to ignore the concerns of the communities impacted by this project and want to keep the option of coming back to the State for funding that they have repeatedly stated that they do not need.

We need to reevaluate our spending priorities. If the opponents of this bill truly believe that the CJRC will fund this project, there is no need for State appropriations, anyway.

Instead, we need to focus on ensuring that we have the funds to educate our children, and help our struggling citizens, not funding an idea that does not even have the necessary approvals along the entire northeast corridor to come fully into fruition to alleviate traffic up and down I-95. I request the committee to pass a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Delegate Nicole A. Williams, Esq.