

From: **Office of Senator Chris Van Hollen**
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Date: Mon, Dec 20, 2021 at 6:27 PM
Subject: Reply from Senator Van Hollen
To: <lwadams4@gmail.com>

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United States Senate

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Dear Mr. Adams,

Thank you for contacting me concerning the SCMaglev project. I appreciate hearing from you and apologize for the delayed response.

I support increased transportation options along the Northeast Corridor to increase travel speeds and reduce congestions on the roads. The SCMaglev project would use “magnetic levitation” technology to connect Baltimore and Washington, DC with a high-speed rail system. While the project has the potential to provide some benefits, I have serious concerns regarding its impacts on the environment and the communities affected by the proposed pathways.

I also have continuing concerns regarding the affordability of Maglev as well as its potential effect on existing public transportation options. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement, prepared by the Federal Railroad Administration and the Maryland Department of Transportation, suggests that the average cost of a one-way trip could total as much as \$60. This expensive price point invites understandable uncertainty regarding Maglev’s accessibility for middle and working class Marylanders. At the same time, Maglev’s presence could also divert ridership from the Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Train Service and Amtrak, which just received a \$66 billion investment through the bipartisan infrastructure bill that became law in November. I was proud to support this legislation, and its historic down payment on passenger rail will help rejuvenate the Northeast Corridor and optimize intercity travel, including for high-speed rail. Given ongoing efforts to reduce travel times between Baltimore and Washington, DC, it is fair to question the necessity of a new, expensive project like Maglev.

I understand that some opponents of Maglev have concerns that the bipartisan infrastructure bill included federal funding for the project. However, this legislation does not change federal

law or eligibility for federal funding for Maglev and it does not provide any new direct or indirect funding for the Maglev project in Maryland.

I have encouraged state transportation officials to provide residents and local public officials with additional information on the proposed right-of-way and the integration of the SCMaglev project with Governor Hogan's other priorities for the BW-Parkway Corridor. I have also continued to press for more information and time for public comment on the project, even successfully pushing for an extended public comment period on the Environmental Impact Statement. Public input is essential on this matter and all issues before the local, state, and federal government. That is critical to our democracy.

Public transit and rail are essential for mobility within our state and connections to other cities, but these investments must be well-vetted, accessible, and affordable. I will continue to hold all projects to that standard.

Again, thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. Please do not hesitate to contact me whenever I may be of service.

Sincerely,

Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

P.S. Please visit my [website](#), where you can learn more about legislation that I have sponsored or co-sponsored and receive information on the important constituent services provided by my office. Additionally, you can read more [here](#) about my work to respond to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), how to stay safe, and the resources available to help you.

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