



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP)

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BRANCH

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6 /11/2021

Dear Prince George's County Community:

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Today and every year, the Prince George's County NAACP Branch is at the forefront of the movement to ensure all residents' wellbeing. Our efforts include but are not limited to access to adequate public transportation. For good reasons—the decrease in air pollution, keeping traffic congestion lower, and helping riders avoid daily driving stress. These are all valid reasons to support a high-speed superconducting Magnetic Levitation System (Maglev). Unfortunately, as more and more data are being presented, the benefits are significantly decreasing. For instance, this train would only stop in Washington, DC, Baltimore, and Baltimore-Washington International Airport. How would this high-speed train help Prince Georgians alleviate stress if there is no opportunity to catch the train in their county? As a resident of Prince George's County, I, along with most county residents, find that Maglev offers no advantage to their household.

The developers, contractors, and investors are promising several benefits that are certainly questionable. Top officials claim that "...residents in the affected communities support the construction..." Who are these people, and where do they live? They further profess that it is "an opportunity to grow into a better future in which people move more quickly, and thousands of jobs are created." How sustainable are these jobs, and how many will go to Prince George's County residents? Wayne Rogers, Chief Executive of Northeast Maglev, said, "We hope that through time, through engagement, through information, we will be able to alleviate all of the fears that people in local towns have... We are spending much time making sure that the impacts are minimal." Mr. Rogers' statement implies that he accepts the truth that residents' concerns are fundamentally meaningless. One can argue that if the executives minimize our community concerns, what else are they taking for granted?

Another primary concern for residents is that nothing seems to be concrete. There are no accurate fix prices, projected job creations are estimated, and the projected cost per rider is unknown. That's no way to run a business. This project is a public/private partnership (P3) venture. We all remember those chaotic state negotiations and the hit-or-miss construction of the Purple Line that P3s don't always work.

Finally, our members and their families are not supporting Maglev as a transformative transportation project for Prince George's County. Simply because our present system, according to David Henley, Project Director for Baltimore Washington Rapid Rail, is old and outdated, doesn't give credence to accepting an approach that leaves some communities out of the loop. Perhaps, that is the case that a more modernized system is needed; however, we can't throw money at a project that offers no fixed numbers but is promising mostly optimism. We need to find appropriate ways to support all communities and present facts, statistics, and measurable and researched timelines. Currently, Mr. Rogers cannot tell a rider the cost of the train ticket nor the impact that the construction will have on neighborhoods. And because of this, we find Maglev an unsuitable project for public funding.

Respectfully,

Linda Thornton Thomas, President
Prince George's County NAACP