

**TESTIMONY**

**BY**

**WILLIAM M. GEORGE, PRESIDENT**

**PENNSYLVANIA AFL-CIO**

**ABOUT**

**MAGLEV HIGH SPEED RAIL**

**FOR**

**HONORABLE JOSEPH F. MARKOSEK, CHAIRMAN**

**HONORABLE RICHARD A. GEIST, CHAIRMAN**

**HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**PITTSBURGH, PA**

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2009**

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**Maglev High Speed Rail Hearing  
House Transportation Committee  
Submitted by the  
Pennsylvania AFL-CIO  
November 6, 2009**

Good morning Chairman Markosek and Chairman Geist, House Transportation Committee members and Committee Staff. My name is William M. George, President of the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO that represents more than 850,000 organized workers in the Commonwealth.

For all Pennsylvanians including those yet unborn I appreciate this opportunity to urge the Pennsylvania General Assembly to support and promote the completion of the Pennsylvania High-Speed Maglev Project.

High-Speed Maglev will enhance our Commonwealth's and nation's transportation infrastructure and create multiple spin-off benefits that will far exceed its investment costs.

High-Speed Maglev will accomplish this by: creating thousands of construction jobs and thousands more operating jobs; launching economic multipliers for wholesale and retail spending in our economy that result in more jobs; establishing a new industry – Maglev technology manufacturing; supporting traditional heavy industry; and, improving business and real estate opportunities, especially by increasing property values near stations that will attract office centers, retail manufacturers and outlets, hotels, eateries, convention centers and other prime business and employment opportunities.

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Secretary, Allen Biehler, often cites the transportation industry's dictum that ... for every one billion dollars spent on transportation projects 30,000 jobs are created. Based on this equation, the Pennsylvania Maglev Project initially will create 60,000 jobs.

This means for those now with jobs Maglev promises employment security. For those now without jobs Maglev promises employment opportunity. For those not yet of working age and

those not yet born Maglev promises a future in a Pennsylvania that again serves as America's keystone of manufacturing, commerce, transcontinental transportation and prosperity.

Maglev's initial job opportunities will start in southwestern Pennsylvania which readily explains why the United Steelworkers of America and the Pittsburgh Building and Construction Council and other local area unions have joined with government and business as full shareholders of MAGLEV, Inc. The United Steelworkers of America knows Maglev means manufacturing jobs for its members. The Pittsburgh Building and Construction Council knows Maglev means jobs for the members of its affiliated unions, including those unions which represent transportation employees.

The Pennsylvania AFL-CIO supports High-Speed Maglev because we believe it will create jobs initially in this area, and its successful operation here will inspire its expansion statewide and its introduction in other states and nations.

Manufacturing the components of the Maglev system to maintain and expand it will create thousands of jobs in other areas of Pennsylvania. For example, one of two domestic manufacturers of prime construction components of Maglev's guideways is in Coatesville in southeastern Pennsylvania.

Completing and maintaining a Pennsylvania Maglev system will create additional thousands of construction, maintenance and operation jobs and ignite the economic multiplier effect that results in more jobs in Pennsylvania's communities. The operation and maintenance of a Pennsylvania Maglev system will initiate an interstate Maglev system that facilitates our Commonwealth's economic resurgence.

A prime transportation infrastructure is essential to economic prosperity. A High-Speed Maglev system significantly will enhance Pennsylvania's transportation infrastructure.

This is the big picture of Pennsylvania's High-Speed Maglev Project. It is a big picture that prudently responds to Pennsylvania's big challenge – economic revitalization. To triumph we

must think big. The Maglev Project is thinking big, something which we historically have done to promote the best interests of our Commonwealth.

Thinking big in the 1700s and 1800s was creating a Pennsylvania canal system that culminated in an interstate canal system.

Thinking big in the 1800s and very early 1900s was creating rail inclines that enabled passengers and freight to more quickly traverse our mountains.

Thinking big in the early 1900s was creating the Pennsylvania Turnpike and the decision to construct the Hoover Dam in Nevada.

The construction of all of these transportation infrastructures supplied the impetus and ultimately the energy to distant industry, manufacturing and commercial centers that eventually ensured our nation's recovery from our worst economic depression and our emergence as the Arsenal of Democracy.

The construction of the Hoover Dam in the southwest tip of Nevada energized prosperity that benefitted all Americans, including those residing as far away as the northeast tip of Maine. The decision to construct the Hoover Dam was made during the deepest throes of the Terrible Depression of the 1930s. It was made at a time when many nay-sayers said to do anything was too risky. But, that decision was made, and it helped America climb out of that Depression and sustain the infrastructures that today continue to energize the economies of distant industrial and commercial centers, including those in California and Las Vegas, Nevada.

The High-Speed Maglev Project is located in southwestern Pennsylvania, but eventually it will benefit our entire Commonwealth and ultimately allow Pennsylvania to reclaim our legacy as our nation's Keystone State.

The Pennsylvania High-Speed Maglev Project is America's most advanced Maglev initiative and the only one that has amassed the industrial and workforce resources and expert technological knowledge necessary to effectively compete with other nations.

I gratefully commend all partners of Maglev, Inc. who have worked so diligently for so long in a true spirit of putting the best interests of our Commonwealth first by investing their talent, time and energy into recreating a strong and vibrant Pennsylvania. I am very proud that Labor is a steadfast partner.

The High-Speed Maglev Project confronts us with the choice of whether we want America and other nations to depend on Pennsylvania's ingenuity, natural resources, industry and workers or whether we want to depend on them.

The Pennsylvania AFL-CIO contends there are no better workers than Pennsylvania workers. We believe our Commonwealth's best years are ahead if we elect to take the lead in thinking big. We believe a big step toward this ideal is by electing to capitalize on America's prime transportation infrastructure opportunity – the Pennsylvania High-Speed Maglev Project.

The most strategic surface travel west and south from New York, New England and eastern Canada is through Pennsylvania. A Pennsylvania Maglev System would constitute the hub – or be the Keystone – of a national High-Speed Maglev System that would benefit all Americans.

The Pennsylvania AFL-CIO believes our Commonwealth's destiny is to remain America's Keystone State, and thus we urge the Pennsylvania General Assembly to enthusiastically support the completion of the Pennsylvania High-Speed Maglev Project.

Thank you, Mister Chairmen and Members of this Committee.

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