

# Please vote against SB0709

My name is Maria Bernier, I am a constituent from District 45. I would like to submit testimony against Senate Bill 0709 as it is a misguided and ill-thought law that will only subject Marylanders to increased discrimination and police scrutiny for wearing a mask.

Medical exemptions carved out in the law are ineffective. The Maryland Department of Health recommended Universal Masking only last month and with a historic influenza season ravaging ERs, Covid, the resurgence of Measles and Tuberculosis, adding another legal barrier to masking is tantamount to subjecting Marylanders to more disease, lost work time, lost income, striking a blow to businesses and putting an even heavier burden on overwhelmed healthcare systems.

Leaving the decision of who is masking to intimidate up to police sets a dangerous precedent.

I would like to ask why are Democrats doing Trump's work for him and pushing anti-free speech laws on Marylanders.

I would like to quote some excerpts from the organization Jews for Mask Rights who speak out against Mask Bans in New York:

"This legislation ignores the critical role masks play in protecting public health. Masks are [vital for preventing illnesses](#) like COVID-19 and the flu. This will become even more crucial as the [threat of a bird flu \(H5N1\) pandemic](#) escalates and the current administration silences public health information. While the bill includes health-related carveouts, its reliance on subjective interpretations of intent nonetheless endangers those masking for protection.

The idea that someone could be questioned – or even arrested – for masking is both alarming and unjust. **How can anyone feel secure wearing a mask, knowing their intent might be misinterpreted?"**

"The mask ban is fundamentally flawed legislation that causes confusion, invites abuse, and undermines public safety. It imposes unnecessary burdens on [New Yorkers] who wear masks for legitimate reasons and exacerbates systemic inequalities. And it erodes civil rights

precisely when preserving those rights is imperative.

As attacks on individual freedoms become rampant, **it is deeply troubling that Democrat lawmakers – who should be protecting these rights – are instead pushing measures that restrict them.**

Trading our rights for increased policing will help no one. Antisemitism is a real and complex problem, and enacting an unrelated and dangerous bill does nothing to solve it."

source: <https://www.jewsformaskrights.com/resources/why-ny-mask-ban-masked-harassment-fails>