

February 24, 2025

The Honorable Chair Senator William C. Smith, Jr.

Chairman, Judicial Proceedings Committee

2 East Miller Senate Office Building

11 Bladen Street

Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: OPPOSITION of Senate Bill 07091

(Criminal Law - Masked Intimidation - Prohibition (Unmask Hate Act)) - **UNFAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Smith and Judicial Proceedings Committee Members,

My name is Lisa Boscov-Ellen, I am a MD resident and I am writing to urge you to vote unfavorably on House Bill 1081/Senate Bill 0709.

Criminalizing masking does nothing to make anybody safer—on the contrary, it makes life more difficult and more dangerous for everyone. It is bad policy for public health. It adds to stigma against masking which in turn contributes to the harassment of marginalized and vulnerable people. Health exemptions are unfair and impractical and would result in abuse by law enforcement, creating a crisis of civil rights and public health. There is no revision or modification to this bill that would eliminate the harm it would cause. Everyone has a right to protect their health and their privacy.

For these reasons and more I ask that the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee give SB0706 an unfavorable report.