

TESTIMONY ON Senate Bill – FAVORABLE

SB – 0001- Public Safety – Law Enforcement Officers – Prohibition on Face Coverings

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

January 22, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Smit, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mindie Flamholz. I am a resident of Baltimore County, Maryland and have lived in this county for over 40 years and in Maryland for 72 ½ of my 73 years.

I am writing in support of SB 0001 – Public Safety – Law Enforcement Officers – Prohibition on Face Coverings.

I believe in trust. Yet, how are we to trust ICE agents and others when they do not wear anything that identifies them as agents of the government or of local law enforcement?

As a woman, rape is real. If someone masked approaches a woman, what is she to believe? Rape? Kidnapping? I've watched enough movies with masked (mostly men, most likely) approaching people...kidnapping children, torturing, raping, abusing, etc. etc. Or listen to news. The sites and sounds are horrific – seen, heard and/or imagined.

If ICE is truly proud of what they are doing, then why hide? IF what they are doing is truly legal, then why hide? Why use the tactics they are using?

How do we protect our neighbors and friends who are here, contributing to our communities, our economies, who want nothing more than to live in peace? To join us in this American Dream? When people who've committed white collar crimes are arrested, are those arresting them wearing masks? Unidentifiable?

As a woman, I am so angry I could scream. As a Jew who lost relatives to hatred, I could scream. As someone who believes in people's rights and trust, I could scream. (So written testimony is preferable, even though as a QI Gong instructor, I do practice and teach my students to be calm.)

How do we remain calm now? Thankfully, we have you, our legislators, to do the right, the moral and ethical thing.

I, therefore, respectfully and with admiration for the positions to which you were elected and which you hold for the betterment of our state, urge you to issue - FAVORABLE on SB 0001.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of this deeply important bill,

Mindie Flamholz