

**Testimony on Senate Bill – Favorable**  
**SB0001 - Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Prohibition on Face**  
**Coverings**

**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**  
**January 22, 2026**

January 20, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kelly Hodge-Williams and I am a home owner in Garrett County, Maryland. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB0001 - Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Prohibition on Face Coverings which establishes a model policy prohibiting the use of face coverings by law enforcement officers in the course of duty, with limited exceptions.

I support this legislation because it strengthens the transparency, accountability, and public trust that are essential for effective community policing. When law enforcement officers are identifiable, it builds trust between the police and the community they serve. Conversely, the use of face coverings that obscure an officer's identity can create fear and inhibit communication, particularly during routine encounters.

Our county sheriff values transparency and the community has benefited from this. We should not allow armed individuals with masks to intimidate and frighten communities with impunity. By establishing a uniform, statewide policy, SB0001 ensures that all Marylanders, regardless of their location, can interact with law enforcement with confidence and clarity.

For these reasons, I strongly urge a favorable report on SB0001.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kelly Hodge-Williams  
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