

**Senate Bill 1:
Public Safety – Law Enforcement Officers – Prohibition on Face Coverings
Senate Judicial Proceedings
January 22, 2026
Position: FAVORABLE**

Dear Chairman Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Eileen Zeller. I live in Clarksville, MD (District 9). I am writing in support of SB 1.

I feel viscerally about this issue. Although my parents and grandparents survived the horrors of Nazi Germany, the majority of our family—dozens of their brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, and cousins—were murdered in concentration camps. Before that, they were terrorized in the streets, in their workplaces, in their schools, and in their homes by Brown Shirts and the Gestapo—none of whom were masked.

I will not attempt to draw direct analogies between the Gestapo and ICE. But when you have brown skin in the United States and are stopped by a masked individual dressed as law enforcement who demands to know whether you are a citizen, the terror is the same.

Policing in a democracy depends on public consent, not fear. Law enforcement already holds significant power: weapons, the authority to detain and arrest, legal protections, and institutional backing. When officers are anonymous, that power imbalance deepens.

I support SB1 because for democracy and the rule of law to survive, law enforcement must be accountable—not a source of fear and intimidation.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB1.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Eileen Zeller
Clarksville (District 9)