

Andrew Lewis

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District 21

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 0001, Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers -
Prohibition on Face Coverings

1/14/2026

TO: Chair William C. Smith, Jr. & the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Andrew Lewis

Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee, my name is Andrew Lewis, I live in Odenton, Maryland, and I am writing to support SB 0001, Prohibition on Face Coverings.

Accountability is the cornerstone of any form of society. Any place where two or more people meet, be it for commerce; camaraderie, or politics, history shapes these interactions. If I cannot look back and recall how much a grocer charges me for an apple, how can I pay them? If my doctor does not sign my prescription, how will I get my needed medication from a pharmacy?

The ability to look back, and identify who, did what, and when, is central to our ability to have any mutual understanding. How then, can we expect our State to function without accountability in its law enforcement? A population of citizens, empowered by the State to make choices not only of life and death, but of freedom and detainment, must be held accountable. While it is true that members of Law enforcement do require certain protections to make their jobs possible, too many protections make our watchmen unwatchable. Those whom the state empowers to use force should be held more accountable for their actions, not less.

Masks create anonymity, turning the very people we should be looking to for safety and comfort into faceless danger. It turns them from human beings to faceless arms of an already distant government. Masking of law enforcement builds a wall of mistrust between

officers and the communities they are sent to protect. Witnesses do not come forward, crimes are not reported, officers are not warned of danger, when the average citizen does not feel safe speaking with members of law enforcement agencies.

Please let Maryland be a safer place for all of us than elsewhere in our country. Prohibiting masked law enforcement is one small step towards ensuring the people wearing those badges are discharging their duties faithfully. I urge you to support SB 0001 and help ensure that Maryland's law enforcement is being held to the highest standards of conduct.

Thank you,

Andrew Lewis