

EZRA MACLEOD TOWNE

Testimony Favorable to HB0351: Constitutional Rights - Violations and Digital Masking

March 31, 2026

Senator William C. Smith, Chair, Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, and esteemed members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

My name is Ezra Towne, and my pronouns are they/them. I am writing to you today because **I strongly support HB0351, and ask for a favorable report from the Judicial Proceedings Committee.**

As a transgender person, I am deeply concerned about when transgender folks encounter police and the forms of harrassment that they face.

According to Policing Progress, a report from the ACLU, transgender people are transgender people are 32.8% more likely to have police-initiated contact than other LGBTQ+ people in the last 12 months.¹ But that is not all:

- Transgender and nonbinary people are 44.9% and 33.1% more likely than LGBTQ+ cisgender men to be harassed by police via insulting language.
- Black transgender recipients were most likely to have experienced physical force from police.

HB0351 is a simple bill, that will protect all people from inappropriate police interactions, including violence, but especially so for trans, nonbinary, and black people.

When police officers face disciplinary action as a result of their discriminatory (and sometimes violent) behavior, their records are protected within internal police HR records and generally unavailable to the public.

HB0351 will make it possible for those who experience these disturbing interactions with police to have access to various data that would reveal the identity of the federal agent in the case of a court order on behalf of a plaintiff.

This information is critical to holding police officers accountable to the public they are charged with protecting.

For these reasons, **I ask for a favorable report on HB0351: Constitutional Rights - Violations and Digital Masking.**

Sincerely,
Ezra MacLeod Towne
Wheaton, D18

¹<https://www.aclu.org/publications/policing-progress-findings-from-a-national-survey-of-lgbtq-peoples-experiences-with-law-enforcement>