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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 0001, Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers -
Prohibition on Face Coverings
Testimony submitted on 20 January 2026
TO: Chair William C. Smith, Jr. & the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
FROM: Ariana Giles

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

The face coverings used by law enforcement, such as ICE officers, serve only to protect their identities so that they can act in cruel, unethical, and sometimes questionably legal ways. Masked law enforcement cannot represent the people if we cannot identify them. The sole purpose is to invoke fear. Instilling terror in the population does not build any trust with the community; it destroys it. Passing SB 0001 to prohibit face coverings in law enforcement officers would make me and my neighbors feel safer by providing better accountability. As reports of ICE activity in Maryland increase, I'm scared we'll soon see similarly violent stories to those we've heard from other states. This bill is timely and critically necessary.

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.