

SB0001 - FAV
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Testimony on Senate Bill – Favorable

SB0001—Public Safety – Law Enforcement Officers – Prohibition on Face Coverings

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

January 22, 2026

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

My name is Ruth White and I live in District 13 in Howard County Maryland. I am writing in support of **~~SB0001~~**—Public Safety – Law Enforcement Officers – Prohibition on Face Coverings

SB0001 requires the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission to develop a statewide model policy prohibiting law enforcement officers from wearing face coverings while performing their duties, except when actively engaged in an undercover operation. This legislation promotes transparency, accountability, and trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

I am a lifelong Maryland resident, a mother, and grandmother, and widow of a veteran who also retired from a major national security agency, a committed patriot who cared about the rule of law. I am offering thoughts and prayers for the important decisions you will be making this session on immigration. There are local and national reports of criminals imitating the ICE masking to commit crimes. It is important to me as a mother and grandmother in Maryland to be able to identify and trust police at all levels.

The ICE masking I see pictures of in the news everyday terrifies me - reminding me of the work of special police forces used by a host of autocratic repressive governments my husband abhorred, and in our movies like Star Wars. Intended to instill fear. I want the police to be easily identified so I can trust them and know they are clearly accountable. Public trust of the police makes us all safer.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on **~~SB0001~~**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Ruth White