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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB0001, Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers -
Prohibition on Face Coverings

1-20-26

TO: Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
FROM: Kevin Hencke

Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee, my name is Kevin Hencke, I live in Columbia, Maryland, and I am writing to support SB0001, Prohibition on Face Coverings for Law Enforcement Officers, and to change the effective date of this law to July—or sooner, if possible.

We Marylanders strive to collaborate to create a society where kind people can trust each other, and work hard to improve our lives together. We understand that this is not easy nor guaranteed, and that conflict and misunderstanding is a constant challenge in life.

I am grateful to people who put themselves at risk to make life safer and happier for Marylanders, including most members of our law enforcement. I rely on them to de-escalate confrontations with good people who are having their worst day, to prevent or reduce needless tragedy. Human connection is essential to overcome the divisions between people in conflict, and this is much harder when our faces are obscured.

It is also important to acknowledge that there are potential criminals among our citizens and among our law enforcement, who are empowered to cause suffering if they are protected from consequences by covering their faces. We cannot provide anonymity to people with weapons or positions of power, and expect Marylanders to benefit.

Let us progress towards a safer Maryland and be an example for our country by embodying the concept of Justice for All. Prohibiting masked law enforcement is one small step towards ensuring the people wearing 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 for your time.