

TESTIMONY ON SB1/HB155 – IN SUPPORT

SB1 – Public Safety – Law Enforcement – Prohibition on Face Covering

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

January 22, 2026

TO: Chair William C. Smith, Jr., Vice Chair Jeff Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

My name is Dawn Sacks and I am a resident of Harford County, Maryland. I am writing in support of SB0001/HB0155, Public Safety – Law Enforcement – Prohibition on Face Covering.

Before 2015, immigration agents rarely wore masks except when undercover or during certain targeted actions. Normalizing masks has endangered public safety. Multiple states have arrested people impersonating ICE agents for devious purposes. In some cases masked, plainclothes agents have been mistaken for criminals, creating fear, chaos, and confusion. Most importantly, masking has contributed to a feeling of impunity among certain agents, leading to increased aggression and violence on the part of those agents.

Seeing images of residents and workers being grabbed by masked, armed men, and taken away to unknown locations raises the image of authoritarian, secret police – so hard to believe here in America and in Maryland. Even worse, the many instances of ICE brutality indicate that the violence is accelerating. The murder of Renee Brown makes clear that law enforcement, and especially ICE, should not be allowed to shield their identities by wearing face masks.

Banning the use of masks by ICE and CBP agents will go a long way to alleviate fear and distrust among residents and will help restore faith that agents will be held accountable when their actions exceed their authority, becoming illegal and unconstitutional.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB1.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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