

Testimony on Senate Bill – Favorable

SB 001– Public Safety – Law Enforcement Officers– Prohibition of Face Coverings

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

January 22, 2026

My name is **Janelle Wong**, and I am a **resident of Montgomery County, Maryland**. I am writing in support of **SB 1 – Public Safety Law Enforcement Officers– Prohibition of Face Coverings**.

I am writing in my capacity as a scholar and researcher of Asian American Studies and as an Asian American resident of this state. Immigrants account for more than a third of our state population. Immigrants from Asia make-up more than half of the foreign-born population in Howard County, and more than a third in Montgomery, Carroll, Baltimore, and Anne Arundel Counties. And, about 1 out of every 7 Asian immigrants is undocumented. Asian Americans have seen anti-immigrant sentiment hit our communities hard in the past. Chinese migrants to the U.S. were the first “undocumented” immigrants in U.S. history, arriving under Chinese Exclusion policies in the late 1880s. And our communities were subject to raids, deportations, and racial profiling during that period.

I support **SB 1** not only because of the history of harsh immigration enforcement actions against Asian American communities, but because when ICE agents wear masks, they are shielded from individual accountability and allowed to intimidate our Maryland community members more broadly. This undermines overall trust in the government. In addition, when ICE agents are masked it allows other masked impersonators to exploit fears of ICE and act nefariously, undermining public safety.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a **favorable report** on **SB 1**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Janelle Wong