

Date of Hearing: Thursday 1/22/26

Name: Andrew J. Miller

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TESTIMONY ON SB001 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

Public Safety – Law Enforcement Officers – Prohibition on Face Coverings

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Andrew J. Miller

My name is Andrew Miller. I am a resident of District 11B. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB001, Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers – Prohibition on Face Coverings

I am a Past President of Chizuk Amuno Congregation, a large Conservative synagogue in Pikesville, and I am also Chair of the Synagogue Social Justice Roundtable which includes representatives from 12 partner communities and organizations in Baltimore County, Baltimore City and Howard County.

Our sacred texts command us to love the stranger, as we ourselves were once strangers in the land of Egypt. Many of our families came to the United States to escape persecution. For me and for others in my community, protection of immigrants is therefore a sacred obligation. We have worked over the last 9 years, together with immigrant support organizations, to protect the rights of those who arrived in our country to take refuge from oppressive conditions elsewhere in the world. All of us who are not Native Americans are immigrants or the descendants of immigrants. Immigrants are our neighbors and friends, yet now they are being racially profiled and subjected to cruel treatment by federal agents with little regard for whether they have broken any law.

ICE's terror tactics are not focused on public safety. The use of face coverings is emblematic of everything that is wrong with the practice of the current Federal administration in what it calls enforcement of immigration law but is in fact open violation of federal law, constitutional rights, and due process. All law enforcement officers in our state are required to wear badges and carry identifying information in the normal course of their work, which is one means of ensuring accountability in impartial enforcement of the law. Public Safety § 2-109 requires that when an officer stops someone (for example, a traffic stop or similar encounter), the officer must **display proper identification** and provide their **name and agency-issued identification number** unless there are **exigent circumstances**. Immigration enforcement agents who hide their identities with face coverings and by other means are behaving as a secret police force whose intention is not to protect the public and enforce the law but rather to instill fear and compel compliance even with orders that are illegal. They target not only the people for whom they have detention orders, but also other members of the public

whom they encounter. We have seen them break laws with impunity, secure in the belief that they cannot be identified and held accountable.

The choice before us is clear. Our state must insist on the same level of accountability that we expect from those who enforce the law as employees of state and local government agencies.

Therefore I respectfully ask this committee to return a favorable report on SB001.