

SUPPORT Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Prohibition on Face Coverings Senate Bill 1

In my role as president of the Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County, I continue to hear the concerns and fears of educators as immigration enforcement becomes more pervasive throughout our county. The students and families we serve are afraid for their safety, worry that a guardian will not be home when a child arrives after school, and—as a result—sometimes avoid attending school.

I support Senate Bill 1 and the development of a model policy prohibiting the use of face coverings by any law enforcement officer operating in the state of Maryland. As a local affiliate of the Maryland State Education Association, we reiterate their stance that communities are being traumatized by the increased authoritarian actions of the federal government over the last 12 months, requiring states like Maryland that have the political power and legal wherewithal to resist assaults on our civil liberties, to act. This bill is one of the ways that we can act to protect our community members.

As educators, we have accepted the responsibility to protect our students—every single student regardless of their immigration status—and we are called to protect families and communities. More importantly, our job is to provide an educational environment that inspires students' natural curiosity, imagination, and love of learning. Senate Bill 1's prohibition of masked law enforcement actions is part of creating a safer community that allows every one of our students to thrive.

I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 1.