

To the MD General Assembly SB0001 – Submitted Judith Tanner 1-20-2026
I am strongly in favor of passing SB0001 Public Safety – Law Enforcement Officers –
Prohibition on Face Coverings

Masking protects ICE agents makes people more afraid... it helps keep ICEA agents from being held accountable for illegal actions. This bill will make us all safer since it will enable everyone to be a bit less afraid to report crime for fear that they or someone in their household will be dragged away by an unknown ICE agent, it will make people less afraid to call for help for themselves and others for medical emergencies and situations of abuse and it will make people more willing to be witnesses for crimes they may see. No one, and certainly not ICE agents who are using violence daily, should be able to use anything that will help them avoid responsibility for their actions.

But the foremost reason that you should pass SB0001 is tied to the fact that we have a Federal Gov't that is blatantly racist and corrupt beyond description in just about everything it does and we must stand against hate and for love of neighbor, for justice and democracy. The historical backdrop for ICE terrorism is the unfair immigration system that has existed for many years where all parties refused to pass legislation to deal equitably with immigrants... particularly those who are now deemed "illegal." What is fair about turning a blind eye to those who came without "proper" work papers **but** have done and continue to do much of the hard work that the country needs and wants... those who work on farms, slaughter houses, cleaning hotels and hospitals, being our personal house cleaners and nannies, roofers, construction workers just to name a very few. They pay taxes, and contribute to SS and Medicare and are not eligible for these benefits, they get no health insurance, no retirement benefits and for years everyone concerned has colluded to "not rock the boat"... employers often take advantage of such workers and again we pretend this is not happening. These workers should have been welcomed into the US legally to begin with and offered a "path to citizenship" after a certain number of productive years of living here. Why is that not been the case? I think racism and a lack of will in both parties to fight for fair immigration legislation have been the main two impediments, but "at the end of the day" this is tied to a lack of moral responsibility. Is it really okay to take advantage of people in this way... to have a class of people who do the work we want done, to pretend they are treated fairly when they are not and now to allow ICE to violently pull their families apart, still refusing to see the immorality of our behavior?

ICE offers huge bonuses to get people to sign up. They do not do serious background checks, they recruit agents from places and organizations that promote force and gun use, they let agents use masks and clearly want agents to be those who hold a positive view of coercion through violence ("tough guy" mentality). The Justice Department supports ICE beating people, smashing vehicle windows, abusing protestors, zip-tying children, shooting and killing people. They go house to house pulling people out, to schools, churches, immigration courts where people are petitioning to stay here legally, taking folks who have lived here for many years without any criminal record and who contribute greatly to our state and country, separating families, sending various people back to countries that are quite dangerous for them and detaining many in unsafe camps where death rates are going up.

SB0001 will make us all safer in Maryland but the underlying reason why you should vote for this bill is to keep your integrity as a person, as one who stands up for what is right in terms of protecting innocent people from harm by ICE agents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.