



Testimony - HB 351, Public Safety - Federal Agents - Digital Unmasking
Favorable
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
April 2, 2026
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Honorable Chairman Smith & Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

SEIU Local 500 represents thousands of public sector and higher education workers across Maryland. Our members believe deeply in the rule of law, constitutional protections, and the fundamental principle that no one—especially law enforcement officers acting under color of authority—is above accountability.

HB 351 addresses a growing and dangerous accountability gap. Across the country and here in Maryland, federal agents and contractors have increasingly operated without clear identification, often using unmarked vehicles, obscured badges, or anonymity that makes it nearly impossible for victims of misconduct to seek justice. This erosion of transparency undermines public trust, civil liberties, and workplace safety.

This bill exists because, right now, people are having their constitutional rights violated by individuals acting under color of law—and never even know who harmed them.

That is unacceptable.

In Montgomery County Public Schools, our members serve one of the most diverse communities in the state. Our schools educate large immigrant populations. Our family engagement specialists work directly with parents who are already navigating fear and uncertainty. Our bus drivers, paraprofessionals, and building service workers are often the first line of trust for families who may be reluctant to interact with government institutions.

And yet, those same families are watching a national pattern unfold where unidentified agents detain individuals, use force, or engage in enforcement actions with little to no transparency.

When people cannot identify who violated their rights, there is no accountability. When there is no accountability, there is no justice.

HB 351 directly confronts that problem by closing a dangerous accountability gap that currently leaves Maryland residents—especially immigrant families in places like Montgomery County—vulnerable.

Our members see the consequences every day:

- Parents afraid to attend school meetings or pick up their children;
- Families hesitant to engage with public services;
- Students carrying the trauma of instability and fear into the classroom.

You cannot have strong schools without stable families. You cannot have stable families without trust. And, you cannot have trust without accountability.

HB 351 is about drawing a line and making it clear, if you operate in Maryland and you violate someone's constitutional rights, you will not be allowed to hide behind anonymity.

That is not radical. That is the bare minimum for a functioning democracy.

We urge a favorable report.

Thank you for your time and consideration.