

Senate testimony on HB0351 Digital Unmasking.pdf

Uploaded by: Anne Manuel

Position: FAV

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 0351, Public Safety - Federal Agents - Violations and Digital Unmasking

Chair William C. Smith, Jr. & Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

April 2, 2026

Chair Smith and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee: My name is Anne Manuel. I have lived in Silver Spring, Maryland, for more than 40 years. I am among a group of neighbors who last year formed North Woodside Civil Resistance out of concern for the threat to our democracy posed by the actions of the Trump administration. I am writing to support HB 0351, Public Safety - Federal Agents - Violations and Digital Unmasking.

Federal immigration agents have been operating all over the country as if our laws did not apply to them. Masked unidentified agents terrorize our communities with no regard for basic American protections such as due process, freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and protection from unreasonable searches and seizures.

Violence seems to be an essential part of immigration agents' *modus operandi*; they actually seem to delight in using excessive force. ICE's calling card is the smashed car window, the mother thrown on the ground, the children crying in fear or choking on pepper spray. Videos of brutal apprehensions are posted on government social media accounts, as if for entertainment.

Our state needs to make clear that we do not accept these lawless tactics. We need to impose a price on agents who would terrorize the most vulnerable members of our community as if their lives did not count. Allowing such crimes to continue unchecked invites further abuses. HB0351 would be an important step towards accountability by instructing the state police to gather and preserve evidence in the case of a complaint of misconduct by federal agents.

It is important to clarify what this bill *does not do* as well as what it does. The administration frequently accuses those seeking to hold their agents accountable of wanting to "dox" government agents, and thereby put their lives in danger.

This bill is not about doxing. Digital evidence gathered by the state police would only be turned over to a court authorized to hear a complaint of wrongdoing. HB0351 is a straightforward method to protect our community from violations of basic rights. Thank you for your consideration.

Anne Manuel
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Silver Spring, MD. 20910
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TESTIMONY FOR HB0351 Public Safety.pdf

Uploaded by: Betsy Krieger

Position: FAV

TESTIMONY FOR HB0351 Public Safety – Federal Agents – Digital Unmasking

Position: FAVORABLE

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am a resident of District 41 and the President of Be the Change, a social justice organization.

Across the country, questions about digital surveillance, federal-state coordination, and transparency in law-enforcement encounters have been front-page news. With digital systems—body-worn cameras, automated tools, and online communications—our state needs a clear mechanism to preserve evidence and determine identities when concerns arise. HB0351 provides that clarity without interfering with federal authority or presuming wrongdoing.

HB0351 strengthens public trust by ensuring that Marylanders who report misconduct have a meaningful path forward, while also ensuring that federal agents are protected by a consistent, fair process. It is a balanced reform that reinforces democratic accountability at a moment when communities are asking for exactly that.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a FAVORABLE report on HB0351.

Betsy Krieger

411 Hawthorn Rd

Baltimore, MD 21210

HB 0351 2026.pdf

Uploaded by: Cathy Stogel

Position: FAV

**Testimony for: HB 0351 Constitutional Rights - Violations and Digital Unmasking
Judicial Proceedings Committee
Favorable position**

Submitted by Cathy Stogel

Dear Honorable Committee members,

As a resident of Howard County I am writing in support of HB 0351. It is an extremely necessary step to insure the safety of Maryland residents. ICE agents must be held accountable for their misconduct.

If there is no accountability for federal law enforcement officers operating here in Maryland than we no longer have any protection from civil rights violations.

ICE agents hide behind masks so they can not be identified when they break laws. This bill would ensure that those exercising state power can be identified. Sadly we have all heard about numerous instances of people pretending to be ICE agents while threatening and attempting to detain residents!

The bill will enable state authorities to preserve evidence (such as surveillance or cellphone data) to ensure that when misconduct occurs it can be investigated and prosecuted.

This legislation will also allow victims of (alleged) misconduct to seek compensation in Maryland courts, aiming to stop federal agents from violating constitutional rights under the cover of anonymity.

Please vote favorably on this bill to protect the safety and civil rights of all Marylanders.

Thank you,
Cathy Stogel
Ellicott City

HB0351 – Public Safety – Federal Agents – Digital

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY FOR HB0351
Public Safety – Federal Agents – Digital Unmasking

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Moon

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, Cochair

Position: FAVORABLE

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting this testimony in support of **HB0351** on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. We are an association of unpaid citizen advocates—individuals and grassroots groups in every district—representing more than 30,000 Marylanders.

HB0351 creates court-supervised process for handling complaints of misconduct involving federal law-enforcement agents. When a Marylander files a complaint, the bill allows the Attorney General or a State’s Attorney to direct the Maryland State Police to collect and securely retain digital identifying information about the agent involved. That information can only be accessed with a court order, preserving both accountability and due-process protections.

Across the country, questions about digital surveillance, federal-state coordination, and transparency in law-enforcement encounters have been front-page news. With digital systems—body-worn cameras, automated tools, and online communications—our state needs a clear mechanism to preserve evidence and determine identities when concerns arise. HB0351 provides that clarity without interfering with federal authority or presuming wrongdoing.

The bill directly supports the mission of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. Our work centers on transparency, equity, and civic empowerment. HB0351 strengthens public trust by ensuring that Marylanders who report misconduct have a meaningful path forward, while also ensuring that federal agents are protected by a consistent, fair process. It is a balanced reform that reinforces democratic accountability at a moment when communities are asking for exactly that.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a **FAVORABLE** report on HB0351.

SEIU Local 500 Testimony in Support of HB 351 Sena

Uploaded by: Christopher Cano

Position: FAV



Testimony - HB 351, Public Safety - Federal Agents - Digital Unmasking
Favorable
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
April 2, 2026
Christopher C. Cano, MPA
Director of Political & Legislative Affairs on Behalf of SEIU Local 500

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.

HB 351 April 2 2026 PDF.pdf

Uploaded by: Cynthia Sokolow

Position: FAV

Testimony on House Bill 351 - Position Favorable
Constitutional Rights - Violations and Digital Unmasking

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

April 2, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and Members of the Committee,

I, Cynthia Sokolow, of Howard County, Maryland urge you to **vote in favor of HB 351.**

This bill creates a court supervised process for handling complaints of misconduct involving federal law enforcement agents. It allows the Maryland Attorney General to have police collect and securely retain digital identifying information about the agent, but only with a court order.

Due to the increase of minimally trained and unsupervised ICE agents in our communities nationwide, it is prudent to set standards proactively in Maryland. This law will:

- * Provide transparency to the public,
- * Preserve evidence,
- * Hold law enforcement accountable,
- * Protect law enforcement agents from false accusations,
- * Strengthen public trust,
- * Will facilitate our local police in continuing with their normal law enforcement obligations
- * Will be cost saving in the future by eliminating unnecessary investigations or law suits.

Please vote YES on HB 351.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Sokolow
21042

EzraTowne_HB0351_FAV_2026_0331 (JPR).pdf

Uploaded by: Ezra Towne

Position: FAV

EZRA MACLEOD TOWNE

Testimony Favorable to HB0351: Constitutional Rights - Violations and Digital Masking

March 31, 2026

Senator William C. Smith, Chair, Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, and esteemed members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

My name is Ezra Towne, and my pronouns are they/them. I am writing to you today because **I strongly support HB0351, and ask for a favorable report from the Judicial Proceedings Committee.**

As a transgender person, I am deeply concerned about when transgender folks encounter police and the forms of harrassment that they face.

According to Policing Progress, a report from the ACLU, transgender people are transgender people are 32.8% more likely to have police-initiated contact than other LGBTQ+ people in the last 12 months.¹ But that is not all:

- Transgender and nonbinary people are 44.9% and 33.1% more likely than LGBTQ+ cisgender men to be harassed by police via insulting language.
- Black transgender recipients were most likely to have experienced physical force from police.

HB0351 is a simple bill, that will protect all people from inappropriate police interactions, including violence, but especially so for trans, nonbinary, and black people.

When police officers face disciplinary action as a result of their discriminatory (and sometimes violent) behavior, their records are protected within internal police HR records and generally unavailable to the public.

HB0351 will make it possible for those who experience these disturbing interactions with police to have access to various data that would reveal the identity of the federal agent in the case of a court order on behalf of a plaintiff.

This information is critical to holding police officers accountable to the public they are charged with protecting.

For these reasons, **I ask for a favorable report on HB0351: Constitutional Rights - Violations and Digital Masking.**

Sincerely,
Ezra MacLeod Towne
Wheaton, D18

¹<https://www.aclu.org/publications/policing-progress-findings-from-a-national-survey-of-lgbtq-peoples-experiences-with-law-enforcement>

HB 351- Digital Unmasking - Favorable Testimony JP

Uploaded by: Jim Caldiero

Position: FAV



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Testimony HB 351 - Constitutional Rights - Violations and Digital Unmasking Favorable Report

To: Sen. Will Smith, Chair, Sen. Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice-Chair, and
Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
From: Jim Caldiero, Lead Advocate Immigration,
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry-Maryland
Date: April 2, 2026,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer written testimony IN FAVOR of **HB 351 - Constitutional Rights - Violations and Digital Unmasking** which will allow Maryland State Police to gather as much available information as possible about a federal agent engaged in certain alleged misconduct and allow that such information may be made available when complaints are filed under 42 USC Section 1983, civil rights violations.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents currently enjoy qualified immunity, a judicial doctrine (not a statute) that protects them from lawsuits unless it can be proven that they have committed an egregious violation of constitutional rights, under 42 USC Section 1983.

Recent efforts in Congress and several states—New York, California, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Tennessee—seek to change this. While qualified immunity remains, the subject bill will allow state law enforcement officers to obtain as much evidence as possible in pursuit of a civil rights violation by a federal immigration officer.

Ensuring that evidence is collected when an egregious violation of a person's civil rights has occurred and making that evidence available when a complaint is filed is consistent with my faith. I share that faith with more than 4000 Unitarian Universalists across Maryland. It calls me to affirm justice for all, a principle embedded in our U.S. Constitution AND our Maryland Declaration of Rights; a principle that insists that no one is above the law. We must do all that we can to ensure and aid accountability.

Please vote in favor of **HB 351**.

Thank you.

UULM-MD c/o UU Church of Annapolis 333 Dubois Road Annapolis, MD 21401 410-266-8044,

www.uulmmd.org info@uulmmd.org www.facebook.com/uulmmd www.twitter.com/uulmmd

HB351, FAV, Jud Proc.pdf

Uploaded by: Lore Rosenthal

Position: FAV

*Lore Lyon Rosenthal
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SimplicityGroupsMD@gmail.com*

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Testimony on: HB351 - Constitutional Rights - Violations and Digital Unmasking

Organization: Individual

Person Submitting: Lore Lyon Rosenthal

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: April 2, 2026

Dear Chairman Smith and members of the committee,

I am writing in favor of **HB351 - Constitutional Rights - Violations and Digital Unmasking**

It is time for the state of Maryland to start prosecuting ICE agents and others who break the law or disregard our constitutional rights. This bill is a step in the right direction. It allows the States Attorney and others to collect proof (from police cams, cell phones, etc) that blatantly shows that officers are disregarding the constitution.

Now that the Trump administration has left Minnesota, he says that Maryland is next. If our president is waging an all-out assault on our immigrant population (as well as peaceful protesters), we need to make sure that there is legal protection in place.

For all these reasons, I recommend a favorable report on HB351.

Thanks,

Lore Lyon Rosenthal

Rachel Torrence HB0351.pdf

Uploaded by: Rachel Torrence

Position: FAV

Contact information: Rachel Torrence (phone number: (443)-834-4079) (Zip code: 21234)
3/31/2026

To judicial proceedings committee chair William C. Smith, Jr., vice chair Jeffrey D. Waldstreicher, and committee members Nick Charles, William G. Folden, Shaneka T. Henson, Mary-Dulany James, Sara N. Love, Michael W. McKay, C. Anthony Muse, Charles E. Sydnor III, and Christopher R. West-

I'm writing to support bill HB351: Constitutional Rights - Violations and Digital Unmasking - Judicial Proceedings Committee to pursue justice and accountability for seemingly lawless federal officers.

This bill would require Maryland to actually investigate and identify "judicial officers" -- defined to include all law enforcement and agents of courts, including ICE -- who violate civilians' constitutional rights, so that they can pursue justice against their abusers. In short, this bill would greatly increase the opportunity for people harmed by ICE and other federal law enforcement, who so rarely face consequences for their belligerence, to take action against their abusers.

I urge you to vote in favor of this bill to take steps collectively towards holding federal agents accountable for their abuse of power and violations of American's constitutional rights.

HB0351 - crossover bill - FAV - Public Safety - Fe

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

HB0351 Crossover Bill RichardKaplowitz FAV

04/02/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz

Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON CROSSOVER BILL HB#0351- POSITION: FAVORABLE
Public Safety - Federal Agents - Digital Unmasking

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

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of crossover bill HB#0351, **Public Safety - Federal Agents - Digital Unmasking**

The conclusion of the Guardian Newspaper is that *The alarming rise of US officers hiding behind masks: 'A police state'*¹

Reported by [Sam Levin](#) in Los Angeles - Mike German, an ex-FBI agent, said immigration agents hiding their identities 'highlights the illegitimacy of actions'

Some [wear](#) balaclavas. Some [wear](#) neck gators, sunglasses and hats. Some wear masks and [casual clothes](#). Across the country, armed federal immigration officers have increasingly hidden their identities while [carrying out immigration raids](#), arresting [protesters](#) and [roughing up](#) prominent Democratic critics. It's a trend that has sparked alarm among civil rights and law enforcement experts alike.

Mike German, a former [FBI](#) agent, said officers' widespread use of masks was unprecedented in US law enforcement and a sign of a rapidly eroding democracy. "Masking symbolizes the drift of law enforcement away from democratic controls," he said.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has insisted masks are necessary to protect officers' privacy, arguing, [without providing evidence](#), that there has been an uptick in violence against agents. But, German argued, the long term consequences could be severe. The practice could erode trust in the US law enforcement agencies: "When it's hard to tell who a masked individual is working for, it's hard to accept that that is a legitimate use of authority," he noted. And, he said, when real agents use masks more frequently, it becomes easier for [imposters](#) to operate.

German – who previously [worked undercover](#) in white supremacist and militia groups and is now a fellow at the Brennan Center for Justice, a non-profit – spoke to the Guardian about the dangers of officer masking, why he thinks officers are concealing themselves and how far the US has deviated from democratic norms.

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/jun/25/immigration-officers-wearing-masks>

HB0351_Crossover Bill_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

There are too many videos online showing misconduct by alleged law enforcement wearing masks while violating civil and constitutional rights. These are crimes being committed that should be prosecuted.

This bill authorizes the Office of the Attorney General or a State's Attorney, upon receipt of a complaint of federal agent misconduct, to direct the Maryland State Police to gather and securely retain certain identifying digital data about a certain federal agent or federal agents; and authorizing a certain complainant to obtain certain identifying digital data only pursuant to a court order issued in a certain case.

Adding the certainty of prosecution with possible conviction may, it is hoped, cause moderation in how federal law enforcement interacts with the public in Maryland.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on crossover bill HB#0351.

2026 HB0351 test supporting 033126.pdf

Uploaded by: Melinda Littell

Position: FWA

**Testimony Supporting HB0351
Constitutional Rights - Violations and Digital Unmasking**

FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

March 31, 2026

The Honorable Chair, Senator William C. Smith, Jr., Vice Chair Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, and esteemed members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

I am writing to ask you to vote in support of House Bill 351. This bill is a commonsense evidence preservation measure that would ensure that pertinent digital evidence is saved for future use in the event a misconduct complaint is filed against a judicial officer. Specifically, the Attorney General, a State Prosecutor, or a State's Attorney would be authorized to direct state and local law enforcement agencies to gather and retain identifying digital data about judicial officers in cases involving officer misconduct, including violations of constitutional rights, civil rights laws, or criminal laws.

The bill is not authorizing "doxxing" because the information is non-public and is saved confidentially, and would only be disclosed to a complainant pursuant to a court order in connection with legal proceedings.

Creating a mechanism for obtaining and preserving digital information is critical to holding judicial officers accountable to the public they are charged with protecting. It would have the added benefit of serving as a deterrent to abusive conduct if judicial officers knew the digital data associated with their interactions with the public could be presented in misconduct cases against them.

Many in our communities are fearful for good reason because they see officers apprehending people without probable cause and based on unlawful racial profiling. They see excessive force being used by officers in some cases. Maryland should do what it can to alleviate the fear and stop these abuses.

For these reasons, I urge your favorable report on HB0351 as amended.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melinda Littell
Arnold, D33C

HB 351_ Public Safety - Federal Agents - Digital

Uploaded by: Trudy Tibbals

Position: UNF

HB 351: Public Safety - Federal Agents - Digital Unmasking: Please advocate **TO OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to respectfully **oppose HB 351**, concerning *Public Safety – Federal Agents – Digital Unmasking*.

This legislation raises serious concerns about public safety, operational security, and the proper balance between state and federal authority. Federal law enforcement officers often operate in sensitive environments involving organized crime, drug trafficking, terrorism, and violent criminal networks. Publicly disclosing identifying information—particularly in a digital format—could expose these officers and their families to harassment, retaliation, or physical danger.

In an era where personal information can be rapidly disseminated and weaponized online, **“digital unmasking” creates significant risks**. Even limited disclosures can quickly spread beyond their original intent, potentially compromising ongoing investigations or placing officers at personal risk.

Additionally, federal law enforcement operates under federal authority. State-level policies that interfere with or attempt to regulate federal operations may create constitutional and jurisdictional conflicts, **leading to costly legal disputes** and unnecessary tension between state and federal agencies.

Transparency and accountability are important principles, but they must be balanced with the safety of law enforcement personnel and the integrity of ongoing investigations. Existing oversight mechanisms already exist at the federal level to address misconduct or abuse, without broadly exposing individual officers to potential harm. **HB 351** strikes this balance.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to **oppose HB 351**.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Trudy Tibbals

hb351.pdf

Uploaded by: Will Vormelker

Position: INFO

HON. STACY A. MAYER
CIRCUIT COURT
JUDGE
BALTIMORE COUNTY
CHAIR

HON. RICHARD SANDY
CIRCUIT COURT
JUDGE
FREDERICK COUNTY
VICE-CHAIR



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MARYLAND JUDICIAL COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
FROM: Legislative Committee
Suzanne D. Pelz, Esq.
410-260-1523
RE: House Bill 351
Constitutional Rights – Violations and Digital Unmasking
DATE: March 4, 2026
(4/2)
INFORMATIONAL COMMENT PAPER

The Judiciary respects the separation of powers doctrine and acknowledges the policy-making authority of the legislative branch. As such, the Judiciary has no position on the policy aims of this legislation.

The Judiciary only writes to note concern with the use of the term “judicial officer” throughout the amended bill. House Bill 351 was initially drafted to add to the Public Safety Article and would allow claims against a “federal agent” for use of excessive force, assault, kidnapping or unlawful detention, or engaging in actions by a federal agent that lead to a credible complaint of a civil rights violation under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. The amended draft defines – for purposes of the subtitle only – “Judicial officer” as “an officer who may: (1) make an arrest with or without a warrant for violations of the United States Code; and (2) carry firearms in the performance of the officer’s duties.”

Because of the limiting definition of “judicial officer” in House Bill 351, it clearly does not include judges, magistrates or commissioners in the Maryland Judiciary. However, “judicial officer” is specifically defined throughout the Annotated Code and the Maryland Rules to the contrary and is a term of art meaning judge or district court commissioner. Pursuant to Maryland Rule 4-102, “judicial officer” is defined “a judge or

district court commissioner.” There are other references in the Code and the Maryland Rules to a “judicial officer” in the conventional sense of a judge or magistrate. For example, the term judicial officer is used in several other sections without its own definition. Cts. & Jud. Proc. § 6-411 (referring to “a judicial officer of the District Court”); § 1-605 (same); and § 3-8A-27 (using the term “judicial officer” to refer judges or magistrates in juvenile proceedings). In this bill, the term “judicial officer” contradicts with the Code and the Rules, which could lead to confusion.

The Judiciary would request that the term “judicial officer” be amended to a different term.

cc. Hon. David Moon
Judicial Council
Legislative Committee
Kelley O’Connor