

Testimony on House Bill – Favorable

HB155 - Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Prohibition on Face Coverings

House Judiciary Committee

February 20, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair J. Sandy Bartlett, Vice Chair Debra M. Davis, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Stella Leung, and I am a resident of Baltimore, Maryland. I am writing in support of HB0155/SB0001 - Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Prohibition on Face Coverings.

I support this bill because I believe accountability is essential to legitimate law enforcement, and the visibility of officers' and ICE agents' identities plays a crucial role in that. When you are confident that your actions are not harmful and that your behavior toward fellow human beings is not deplorable, you know there is no reason to hide behind a mask.

Bank robbers, rapists, and other criminals who intend to escape punishment for their actions hide behind masks. Wearing masks doesn't make ICE safer. In fact, it creates less safe conditions because the public can't distinguish federal law enforcement from any other criminal who might don a mask.

That's why it is important for public safety that ICE officers can be identified. Without visible identification and uniform standards, fear and public distrust of law enforcement increase, as does limited accountability for their actions. Furthermore, community members are more likely to intervene if they watch someone being attacked or kidnapped by a masked, unmarked group. There's no way to know whether someone is an ICE officer or impersonating one.

Our local law enforcement officers are easily identifiable. We should not be allowing armed individuals with masks to intimidate and frighten communities with impunity.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB155/SB0001 - Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Prohibition on Face Coverings for transparency and safety.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Stella Leung