

## **TESTIMONY ON HB1415– IN SUPPORT**

### **Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Identification**

**Judiciary Committee, March 6, 2026**

TO: Chair J. Sandy Bartlett, Vice Chair Debra Davis, and members of the Judiciary Committee

My name is Dawn Sacks and I am a resident of Harford County, Maryland. I am writing in strong support of House Bill 1415, which would require law enforcement officers in Maryland to wear visible identification while performing their official duties. This legislation represents a meaningful and necessary step toward rebuilding public trust, ensuring accountability, and upholding the civil rights of all Marylanders.

This legislation is especially important given the context of recent federal enforcement activities across the nation and in Maryland during which masked or unidentified individuals claiming law enforcement authority have carried out arrests and detentions. Whether at rallies, in neighborhoods, or during routine stops, the absence of visible identification has left community members unable to know who is policing them and unable seek redress when something goes wrong.

When officers display identifying information, community members can document encounters and report misconduct. Without that basic information, complaints go unfiled, misconduct goes undocumented, and there is no accountability for abuse or violations of our rights. This lack of transparency and accountability erodes the public trust that is essential to effective policing.

Clear identification policies therefore also benefit law enforcement officers and agencies. When the public can identify an officer, they are better able to distinguish legitimate law enforcement from impersonators or unlawful actors. Visible identification supports professionalism, builds community confidence, and makes the job of policing safer and more effective.

HB 1415 addresses these issues by directing the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission — a body with the expertise and operational knowledge to craft sound policy — to develop a model policy mandating the use of worn identification and requiring every law enforcement agency in the state to adopt a consistent policy. This structure establishes a meaningful, enforceable floor for identification standards statewide.

Many officers already comply with robust identification standards; this bill ensures those best practices are universal across all agencies operating in Maryland.

Transparency, accountability, and the protection of civil rights are not partisan issues – they are foundational values shared by all of us. House Bill 1415 will strengthen public trust in law enforcement, protect the rights of Maryland residents, and ensure that those who exercise police powers in our state do so with the transparency the public deserves. No one operating in this state – regardless of their level of government – should act with anonymity while exercising law enforcement authority.

I respectfully urge the Committee to vote favorably on HB 1415 and advance this important legislation. Thank you for your time and your service to the people of Maryland.

Respectfully submitted,

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