

House Bill 1415:
Public Safety – Law Enforcement Officers – Identification
House Judiciary
March 10, 2026
Position: FAVORABLE

Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Eileen Zeller. I live in Clarksville, MD (District 9A). I am writing in support of HB 1415.

In previous written testimony to this committee, I described how viscerally I feel about these kinds of issues, citing my family history:

Although my parents and grandparents survived the horrors of Nazi Germany, the majority of our family—dozens of their brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, and cousins—were murdered in concentration camps. Before that, they were terrorized in the streets, in their workplaces, in their schools, and in their homes by Brown Shirts and the Gestapo.

Other than the exceptions noted in HB 1415, the only reason I can imagine for law enforcement to not wear visible identification is to inspire terror. Policing in a democracy depends on public consent, not fear. Law enforcement already holds significant power: weapons, the authority to detain and arrest, legal protections, and institutional backing. When officers are anonymous, that power imbalance deepens.

I support HB 1415 because for democracy and the rule of law to survive, law enforcement must be accountable—not a source of terror and intimidation.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB 1415.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Eileen Zeller
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