

Testimony on House Bill 155 – Favorable

HB 155 - Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Prohibition on Face Coverings

Judiciary Committee

February 24, 2026

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

I, Cynthia Sokolow of Howard County, MD, offer favorable testimony in **support of HB 155**.

All law enforcement officers, including federal agents, should keep their faces uncovered and wear clearly identifiable regulated uniforms and badges. Exceptions would be for undercover missions and other certain circumstances.

As women, we must constantly be aware of our surroundings. Whenever we feel our immediate safety could be compromised, we search for recognizable trusted law enforcement officials by their state or county issued uniform and badge. We would never expect them to be wearing intimidating masks. We are more likely to report crimes and feel more secure if our law enforcement were not hiding behind face coverings.

Criminals can easily impersonate ICE agents and other law enforcement just by wearing plain clothes and masks.

Continuing to be masked and unidentifiable will only increase confusion and discomfort in the community. Confidence in local and state police has been declining. In order to restore trust, all who enforce laws in Maryland, should not have their faces covered.

I urge to you to vote **in favor of HB 155**.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Sokolow

21042

favorable report on HB 639.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Sokolow

21042