

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
On House Bill HB-155**

**Public Safety-Law Enforcement Officers-Prohibition of Face Coverings**

**Favorable**

**Judicial Committee**

February 24, 2026

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Dear Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

My name is **Deborah (“Debbie”) Shulman**. I am a **31-year resident of Olney, Maryland, in District 14**, and I am submitting this testimony **in strong support HB-155**

HB- 155 is a necessary and timely measure that promotes **accountability, transparency, and public safety**. Currently, federal law enforcement agents—particularly ICE—are permitted to conduct enforcement actions while **masking their faces and concealing their identities**. This practice undermines public trust, weakens constitutional policing, and creates fear within our communities.

**HB -155 strengthens public safety** by increasing transparency. When officers are clearly identifiable, residents can distinguish legitimate law enforcement from impersonators. Nationwide, there has been an increase in reports of individuals posing as law enforcement officers to intimidate or harm others. Clear identification helps prevent confusion, fraud, and abuse and protects both the public and legitimate officers.

**HB -155 protects civil liberties and due process**. Masked or unidentified enforcement actions can create fear and uncertainty, particularly in immigrant communities. Transparency is foundational to constitutional policing. HB-155 promotes accountability where it is currently lacking, especially among federal agents operating within Maryland.

**Unmasking law enforcement builds community trust**. Public safety depends on cooperation between residents and law enforcement. When people fear interactions with masked and unidentifiable officers, they are far less likely to report crimes, serve as witnesses, or seek help when they need it most.

**HB-155 reflects Maryland values**. Our state must set clear and consistent standards for all law enforcement operating within our borders. Federal officers conducting civilian enforcement while

wearing masks is inconsistent with Maryland's commitment to dignity, fairness, and the rule of law.

There is also a **fiscal impact** to consider. Enforcement actions lacking transparency frequently leads to increased litigation and court costs, which are ultimately borne by taxpayers. Accountability reduces unnecessary legal exposure and protects public resources.

HB-155 does not prevent lawful enforcement. Officers can continue to do their jobs, but they must do so **responsibly, lawfully, and transparently**.

No person is illegal.

Everyone deserves dignity and constitutional protections.

Masked enforcement emboldens misconduct and must not be allowed in Maryland.

Ending 287(g) agreements and unmasking ICE are both aligned with **Maryland's values and commitment to justice**.

I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a **favorable report on HB-155**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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