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Committee: Judiciary
Testimony on HB1415- Public Safety Law Enforcement Officers Identification
Organization: Individual
Person Submitting: Cynthia Pearson
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: 10 March 2026

Dear Chairman Bartlett and members of the committee,

I am writing in favor of HB1415 (Public Safety Law Enforcement Identification). I believe that requiring all law enforcement officers that operate in Maryland to wear clear identification while on duty is not only important, but it is also feasible. Many people testifying in support of this legislation emphasize the need for a state law to require that all law enforcement officers, including federal agents, wear clear identification. The arguments in favor of the need for this law are compelling.

Some opponents of requiring all officers to wear clear identification claim that law enforcement officers need to shield their identity to protect themselves from people who might later harm them. I believe that claim is exaggerated. Clearly identified law enforcement officers interact with criminals all the time, including some very dangerous ones. Yet they conscientiously do their jobs, arresting criminals and testifying in court. One of my favorite members of my extended family was a police officer who spent several years on the narcotics task force in his city. He arrested and testified against some really bad folks who were running very lucrative businesses making meth. He was always identifiable. He's now retired after serving for more than twenty-five years. His experience and the experience of tens of thousands of other law enforcement officers who have worked while wearing clear identification are important to consider. Except in certain situations, which this legislation allows for, law enforcement officers can safely work while wearing clear identification.

For all these reasons, I recommend a favorable report on HB1415.

Thank you,

Cynthia Pearson