

Testimony on House Bill – Favorable

HB155 - Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Prohibition on Face Coverings

Judiciary Committee

[DATE]

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

My name is Valerie Hirsch and I am writing in support of SB0001 - Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Prohibition on Face Coverings.

When you are confident that your actions are not harmful and your behavior towards fellow human beings is not deplorable, you know that there is no reason to hide behind a mask.

You know who does hide behind masks? Bank robbers, rapists, and other criminals who have the intent of escaping punishment for their actions. ICE isn't made safer by wearing masks. They are actually creating less safe conditions because the public isn't able to differentiate federal law enforcement from any other criminal who might don a mask.

That's why it is important for public safety that ICE officers can be identified. Without visible identification and uniform standards, fear and public distrust in law enforcement increases. Furthermore, community members are more likely to intervene if they watch someone being attacked or kidnapped by a masked, unmarked group. There's no way to know if someone is an ICE officer or if they are impersonating an ICE officer.

Our local law enforcement officers are easily identifiable. We should not be allowing armed individuals with masks to intimidate and frighten communities with impunity.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB155 - Public Safety - Law Enforcement Officers - Prohibition on Face Coverings for transparency and safety.

Thank you for your time and consideration.