

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT with AMENDMENT OF BILL 5-26
Unmask ICE Act --
March 6, 2026

President Fani-González and members of the Council,

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Social Witness and Action Committee and Presbyterians for Police Transformation of Takoma Park Presbyterian Church. We write to strongly support Bill 5-26, requiring all law enforcement who operate in Montgomery County to show their face so they can be identified.

As followers of the nonviolent Jesus, we are appalled by what is illegally being done to our immigrant friends and neighbors in our names.

We as a county, pride ourselves and are widely known for our diversity. We celebrate how the 30% of community who are migrants add to the vibrancy of our community through sharing their culture, food, talents, labor and entrepreneurship.

We do not pretend to know if the County has the legal authority to stop ICE agents from wearing masks or to arrest them when they do. It is **imperative and our moral responsibility** to do all in our power to ensure that we know who is breaking our laws and to hold them accountable by bringing them to justice. This bill codifies our current police policy of not wearing masks except under very limited circumstances. At a minimum it will allow all of us, and especially our immigrant friends know that it is an immigration official and not our local police, perhaps giving them time to move to a safe space.

This bill will be greatly strengthened by also requiring any law enforcement officer to provide their name, agency and badge number when asked a member of the public or other law enforcement agency requests it.

We as a county must stand firmly with our all our neighbors ensuring their constitutional rights are upheld and do the hard work towards building community trust and racial justice. By adopting this bill we are reaffirming and living our commitment to being a welcoming and safe place for all residents.

We urge you all to unanimously pass Bill 3-26- the County Values Act- as an Emergency Bill with an amendment to require law enforcement officers to identify themselves when asked.

Respectfully,

Ruth Noel on behalf of Social Witness and Action Committee
And Presbyterians for Police Transformation of
Takoma Park Presbyterian Church

