

Submitter: Nicole Chaisson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4138

I strongly oppose House Bill 4138. While I support police accountability and transparency, this bill imposes impractical and potentially dangerous requirements that could undermine officer safety, hinder effective law enforcement, and create legal conflicts with federal authority. Key reasons for opposition include: Officer Safety Risks: Prohibiting facial coverings could expose officers to unnecessary hazards in situations involving chemical irritants, health concerns, or crowd control. Exceptions are too narrow and may not cover all legitimate operational needs.

Operational Challenges: Mandating constant visible identification (including names) could compromise undercover work, tactical operations, or personal safety in high-risk scenarios, even beyond the bill's stated exceptions.

Federal Preemption and Interference: Attempting to regulate federal agents (e.g., ICE, FBI) or restrict Oregon agencies from cooperating may violate federal supremacy, lead to lawsuits, or reduce public safety through limited joint operations. Expanding sanctuary policies in this way could deter necessary collaborations on serious crimes.

Unintended Consequences: Creating new civil causes of action and criminal penalties for officers may increase litigation burdens on local agencies and discourage recruitment/retention in law enforcement.

Public safety requires a balance between accountability and the ability of officers to perform their duties effectively. I urge the Committee to vote against HB 4138 or significantly amend it to address these concerns (e.g., broader exceptions for safety gear or removing federal agent provisions). Thank you for considering my views. I respectfully request that HB 4138 not be advanced in its current form.