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Mayor



Reed K. Mahuna
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County of Hawai`i

POLICE DEPARTMENT

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April 1, 2026

Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
And Members
Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Representatives Tarnas and Poepoe and Members:

RE: SENATE BILL 2203 SD2 RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT
DATE: APRIL 2, 2026
TIME: 2:00 P.M.
PLACE: VIDEOCONFERENCE
CONFERENCE ROOM 325

The Hawaii Police Department (HPD) respectfully offers the following comments on SB2203 S.D. 2, Relating to Law Enforcement, which would establish a criminal offense for the use of a mask or facial covering by a law enforcement officer under certain circumstances. We appreciate the Legislature's commitment to transparency, public trust, and accountability, and we recognize the intent to ensure officers remain identifiable when interacting with the community.

We also acknowledge the changes made in the S.D. 2 draft, including expanded exceptions for certain types of protective gear and for situations where a masked officer is within eyesight of an unmasked officer from the same agency. These revisions reflect an effort to balance accountability with operational needs.

However, HPD respectfully notes several areas where the bill, even as amended, may still present practical challenges. Matters involving officer identification and appropriate concealment are already addressed through departmental policy, professional standards, and oversight mechanisms. These existing frameworks allow for flexibility, tailored guidance, and administrative accountability without the need to impose criminal penalties on officers acting in good faith during dynamic and sometimes hazardous situations.

SENATE BILL 2203 SD2 RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

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In addition, while SB2203 S.D. 2 provides an exception for officers engaged in undercover assignments, it does not fully account for the range of sensitive operations in which officer anonymity is necessary. Support personnel frequently assist in narcotics investigations, gambling enforcement, public morality operations, and other activities where revealing their identity may compromise both safety and operational integrity. These officers may not meet the strict definition of "undercover," and the "within eyesight of an unmasked officer" provision in the S.D. 2 draft may not be feasible or tactically appropriate in many real-world scenarios.

The bill's list of permitted protective equipment, though expanded, also remains limited in scope. Officers encounter environmental hazards, biohazards, and other conditions requiring facial protection that may not fall within the enumerated exceptions. Ensuring officers have the discretion to protect themselves appropriately is essential for safe and effective operations.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony.

Na'u Me Ka Ha'aha'a,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'R' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

REED K. MAHUNA
POLICE CHIEF

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, HI 96837-0158

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Today's Inmate; Tomorrow's Neighbor



COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Representative David Tarnas, Chair

Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 2, 2026

2:00 PM

Room 325 and VIDEOCONFERENCE

STRONG SUPPORT FOR SB2203 SD2 - LAW ENFORCEMENT MASKS

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies in Hawai'i for almost three decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the 3,626 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars¹ and under the "care and custody" of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation on March 23, 2026. We are always mindful that 795 of Hawai'i's imprisoned male population are serving their sentences abroad -- thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands.

Community Alliance on Prisons is in **STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2203 SD2** that establishes the offense of use of a face mask by law enforcement. Transparency and accountability are the basic tenets of a vibrant democracy that law enforcement should model.

We have witnessed ICE agents under the guise of law enforcement in American cities on the news wearing full facial masks and sunglasses to murder American citizens with no consequences. This has not only damaged our democracy - it has made people afraid of their government. A democracy cannot endure under these circumstances.

It is up to everyone to express outrage at these actions and we hope that the committee passes SB 2203 SD2 to demonstrate that Hawai'i will not tolerate these illegal actions in the name of law enforcement. The federal government has put citizens and law enforcement at risk by the actions that we have all witnessed in the name of community safety.

We all need safety from the out-of-control federal government!

¹ DCR Weekly Population Report, March 23, 2026

[Pop-Reports-Weekly-2026-03-23.pdf](#)

SB 2203 SD2 is an important statement that Hawai`i will protect and defend our Constitution and the safety of our neighbors.

Mahalo for this opportunity to express our strong support for SB2203 SD2 in solidarity with our neighbors.



Cade Watanabe, Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Gemma G. Weinstein, President

Eric W. Gill, Senior Vice-President

March 31, 2026

House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Rep. David Tarnas, Chair
Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of SB 2203

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Committee Members:

UNITE HERE Local 5 represents 10,000 working people in the hotel, food service and health care industries across Hawaii. The experiences of our sister locals elsewhere in the U.S., including Minneapolis, Los Angeles, and Washington DC, make clear to us that it is necessary to take action to rein in ICE and DHS across the country.

We do not want our union members, their families, or anyone else in our community to be targeted, terrorized, assaulted, kidnapped, or killed by government agents or anyone else. We do not want their rights to be violated. All people should be treated with respect and dignity.

We urge your support of SB 2203. This measure is an important step toward greater accountability and safeguarding the most vulnerable people in our community.

Thank you.



APRIL 2, 2026

SENATE BILL 2203 SD2

CURRENT REFERRAL: JHA

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Kris Coffield,
President

David Negaard,
Director

Mireille Ellsworth,
Director

Justin Salisbury,
Director

Eileen Roco,
Director

Beatrice DeRego,
Director

Corey Rosenlee,
Director

Amy Zhao,
*Policy and Partnerships
Strategist*

POSITION: SUPPORT

Imua Alliance supports SB 2203 SD2, relating to law enforcement, which establishes the offense of use of a mask or personal disguise by a law enforcement officer.

Imua Alliance is a Hawai'i-based organization dedicated to ending sexual exploitation and gender violence, and combating all forms of systemic exploitation in our society. We have encountered numerous migrant survivors of sexual exploitation in our work, which is why we strongly support measures that advance community safety and survivor protections by reducing the harmful spillover of immigration enforcement into local institutions people rely on for protection, care, and due process.

An important protection for survivors and immigrant communities is banning the use of masking, face coverings that conceal identity, and other practices that prevent clear identification of immigration agents during enforcement actions. **When federal agents operate in camouflage or without visible identification, it creates an atmosphere of fear and confusion that compounds trauma for trafficking survivors, discourages victims from seeking help, and undermines trust in institutions that are meant to offer safety and support.**

The sense that agents could be "secret police" operating in neighborhoods, schools, or community spaces deters survivors from accessing critical services, reporting abuse by traffickers, seeking medical care, or engaging with law enforcement on serious crimes, a documented chilling effect that contributes to further exploitation and isolation.

Some states and localities have already moved to increase transparency and accountability in immigration enforcement by limiting masking practices for federal agents. In California's 2025 "No Secret Police Act," the legislature adopted laws that prohibit certain federal and local law

enforcement officers from wearing masks that hide their identities during enforcement operations, requiring clear identification by name or badge number except in narrowly defined safety situations. Additionally, proposals in cities like Denver have considered face-mask prohibitions for ICE agents as part of efforts to ensure that immigration enforcement does not resemble clandestine operations in community spaces.

At the federal level, bills like the No Anonymity in Immigration Enforcement Act of 2025 (H.R. 4004) would similarly require ICE agents to be identifiable during enforcement activities absent exigent circumstances, underscoring a growing bipartisan concern about transparency and accountability in immigration enforcement.

A ban of masking by law enforcement must be considered as part of our state's overall movement to defend against aggressive ICE enforcement operations, which endanger our community and are especially concerning for victims of exploitation, many of whom are trafficked migrants.

Trafficking survivors are uniquely harmed by escalating ICE raids and related abuses. For survivors of labor and sex trafficking, contact with law enforcement, courts, schools, hospitals, and service providers is already difficult due to trauma, language barriers, isolation, threats from traffickers, and fear of retaliation. When aggressive immigration enforcement expands—especially raids and “at large” arrests—survivors are less likely to report trafficking, cooperate with investigations, seek protective orders, access emergency shelter, or obtain medical care because they fear that asking for help could expose them or their family members to detention or removal. This directly benefits traffickers, who commonly use immigration status as a tool of coercion (“If you go to the police, you’ll be deported”). In short: when ICE presence and surveillance intensify, traffickers gain leverage, and survivor safety declines.

Recent reporting underscores how quickly enforcement tactics can scale and how that creates broader community fear. For example, national coverage in early 2026 described heightened enforcement operations and resulting backlash after fatal incidents involving federal agents in Minnesota—events that have amplified fear and mistrust, especially among immigrants and mixed-status families. Separately, investigative reporting described a nationwide “skip tracing” surveillance initiative launched in late 2025 to locate large numbers of immigrants using contractors and technology, raising civil liberties concerns that matter deeply for trafficking survivors trying to stay safe from both exploiters and abusers.

2025–2026 data show a growing share of ICE targets have no criminal history. This measure is also necessary because current enforcement patterns increasingly sweep in people without criminal convictions.

-
- TRAC (Syracuse University) reports that 73.6% of people held in ICE detention had no criminal conviction as of November 30, 2025.
 - A January 2026 analysis reported the number of detained individuals with no convictions or pending charges rose sharply—from 3,165 in February 2025 to 25,193 in January 2026, based on ICE data summarized by an independent fact-checking review.
 - Reuters reported that since January 20, 2025, 27% of ICE arrests involved individuals without other criminal charges or convictions (as of March 2025), contradicting claims that enforcement is narrowly focused on serious offenders.

When enforcement expands beyond serious public safety threats, the predictable result is broader community fear, precisely the environment in which trafficking thrives.

Constitutional and legal foundations support state and local limits on immigration enforcement entanglement. This measure is consistent with well-established constitutional principles and case law recognizing that states and localities cannot be compelled to administer or enforce federal regulatory programs.

- Under the anti-commandeering doctrine, the federal government generally may not require state/local officials to carry out federal enforcement. This principle is grounded in Supreme Court precedent including *Printz v. United States* (1997) and later reaffirmations of anti-commandeering limits.
- Courts have also reinforced that immigration enforcement is a federal domain and that state action must be carefully cabined, often cited in debates about state/federal boundaries in immigration enforcement (e.g., *Arizona v. United States* (2012)).

Put simply: Hawai'i can protect public safety while maintaining clear boundaries that prevent immigration enforcement from chilling access to services and justice for survivors.

Similar approaches exist across the U.S. Many jurisdictions have adopted policies to limit state/local participation in federal civil immigration enforcement—often described as “sanctuary” policies—precisely because community safety depends on residents' willingness to report crimes and seek help. The Congressional Research Service summarizes that such jurisdictions typically limit assistance with federal civil immigration enforcement.

Examples include statewide frameworks like the California Values Act, SB 54 (restricting use of state/local resources for immigration enforcement in many circumstances) and TRUST-style limits on detention and cooperation, which have been widely adopted in various forms across states and cities. More recently, proposals and ordinances in places like New York

State and New York City have continued this trend, seeking to curtail deputization agreements and ICE footprint in local facilities.

For trafficking survivors, the ability to safely access shelters, clinics, schools, and the courts can be the difference between escape and continued exploitation. This measure helps ensure that survivors can seek help without fear that the act of reporting abuse will trigger detention, family separation, or deportation. That improves cooperation with law enforcement against traffickers, strengthens prosecutions, and supports safer communities statewide.

With aloha,

Kris Coffield

President, Imua Alliance



IN SUPPORT OF SB2203

The Libertarian Party of Hawaii stands in support of SB2203, a straightforward but essential measure that establishes the offense of a law enforcement officer using a mask or personal disguise while performing official duties.

In any society that values liberty, transparency, and accountability, those who wield the state's monopoly on force must never hide behind anonymity. SB2203 directly confronts this threat by making it a criminal offense for officers to conceal their identities with masks, balaclavas, or other personal disguises during public interactions.

This is about ending the practice of faceless policing that breeds distrust, enables abuse, and undermines the rule of law. When an officer's face is hidden, so is accountability. Citizens (who are often asked to show their own papers) cannot accurately identify who detained them, who used force, or who violated their rights. Complaints become impossible to substantiate, misconduct goes unpunished, and the public is left fearing shadowy enforcers. This erodes the very foundation of a free society. Hawaii must retain the ability to hold government agents personally responsible for their actions.

Anonymous policing invites impersonation risks, chills free speech, and violates core constitutional principles of due process under the 14th Amendment, protection against unreasonable seizures under the 4th Amendment, and the right to petition government without fear of untraceable authority.

SB2203 sends a clear message: no more "secret police" tactics in our islands. Officers serve the people; they must not intimidate them from behind disguises.

Opponents may raise "officer safety" as a loose excuse, but the bill's exceptions protect genuine need. Blanket anonymity is not a valid safety measure. It is a shield of impunity. True safety for officers and the community comes from mutual respect, clear identification, and strict accountability, not concealment. I urge this committee to pass SB2203. Hawaii must reject masked authority and embrace transparency. Our freedom depends on it.

Mahalo for your time and for considering the people's right to see the faces of those who enforce our laws.

In Liberty,

Abbra Green | LPHI Secretary | LibertarianHawaii.com | (808)824-LPHI

**Testimony of HAWAII FILIPINO LAWYERS ASSOCIATION (HFLA)
In SUPPORT of SB2203 SD2**

Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: April 2, 2026

Dear Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe, and members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is **Wilfredo Tungol**, HFLA Advocacy Chair. I submit this testimony on behalf of HFLAA in **support of SB2203 SD2**, which establishes a criminal offense for a law enforcement officer who uses a mask or facial covering while performing their duties, with defined exceptions for undercover operations (where an unmasked officer from the same agency is present within eyesight), motorcycle officers (who must remove coverings as soon as reasonably practicable), and legitimate protective equipment.

HFLA is concerned about protecting the due process rights of our immigrants. It is very important that they can identify that any law immigration official that is confronting them as opposed to someone who is masked and confrontational

When law enforcement officers are masked and unidentifiable, accountability disappears. For immigrant and mixed-status communities in Hawai‘i — who may be unable to tell the difference between a masked state officer and a masked federal immigration agent — this ambiguity creates fear, enables impersonation, and erodes the community trust that makes public safety possible. SB2203 SD2 addresses this directly by making the use of facial coverings by law enforcement a criminal offense, giving Hawai‘i prosecutors and the Attorney General an enforceable standard rather than a policy that can be quietly ignored.

The bill is carefully and practically crafted. The exceptions for undercover operations, motorcycle officers, and legitimate protective equipment show that this measure was designed with real operational needs in mind, not just symbolic politics. California enacted a similar law effective January 2026 — Hawai‘i joining that standard affirms our state’s commitment to transparent, accountable law enforcement. The Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs is the single and final referral for this bill. I urge the Committee to advance it toward final passage.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Committee **PASS SB2203 SD2**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,
Wilfredo Tungol, HFLA Advocacy Chair
808-387-7412



COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

HEARING:

Thursday, April 2, 2026 at 2:00 pm

Via Videoconference and Conference Room 325

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2203, SD2 - RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT.

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

Roots Reborn **strongly supports SB2203, SD2**, which establishes the offense of use of a mask or facial covering by a law enforcement officer.

Roots Reborn is a grassroots, multicultural immigrant-justice and disaster-response organization serving migrant and immigrant communities on Maui and beyond. Born out of the August 2023 wildfires, we immediately stepped in to move aid, navigate systems alongside families, and build the trusted relationships that still anchor our work today. What began as wildfire response has grown into essential infrastructure for immigrant communities facing overlapping crises—from recovery and housing instability to shifting federal policies, increased enforcement, and rising fear.

The trust we have built has given us proximity to hear stories that rarely reach these chambers. Families who survived the fires, who lost homes, who are still piecing their lives together, now live with the additional terror of being separated from their children, their spouses, their neighbors. Many are afraid to go to work or school, or even to seek necessary medical care. For fire survivors already navigating grief, displacement, and rebuilding, this new crisis lands on top of everything else. Recovery becomes impossible when fear is constant.

Since December 2024, we have been meeting this new man-made disaster head-on. Roots Reborn is a founding coalition member of El Pueblo en Acción Maui (EPA Maui)—“The People in Action Maui”—a rapid response network and tipline made up of allied organizations and concerned community members. We exist because we believe an informed, calm community is a safer community.

Through this coalition, we have:

- Distributed over 3,500 flyers on constitutional rights
- Trained more than 700 community members through Know Your Rights workshops
- Delivered over 50 trainings to healthcare providers, social service organizations, business owners, faith communities, educators, and labor union leaders
- Processed more than 450 calls and texts through our tipline from community members concerned about federal enforcement activity
- Trained over 50 volunteer observers in verification, de-escalation, and peaceful documentation

Senate Bill 2203, SD2 creates a new misdemeanor offense for the use of a mask or facial covering by a law enforcement officer in the performance of their duties. There are limited exceptions to account for



masking or hiding identity for health reasons, undercover work and certain circumstances involving safety of the officer.

For months we have seen video evidence of aggressive, heavily armed, masked federal agents subjecting people to excessive force, with no identifying tag or badge, refusing to identify themselves while violating people's constitutional rights to peaceably observe and document their behavior, unlawfully smashing car windows to drag people from their vehicles, and committing unjustified killings. Masked and unidentified federal agents acting in this way is unprecedented. The tactic heightens fear in the public and interferes with accountability for misconduct by the officers. On Maui, we are witnessing community members afraid to go to work and children unable to go to school. We have heard stories from health care providers of patients to obtain necessary health care, and from faith leaders that people feel unable to attend religious services due to fear of a confrontation by unmasked and unidentified federal agents. There are concerns that trust in law enforcement of all kinds, even our local police departments, has eroded as a result of the actions of masked federal agents. Coalition member organizations have been called upon to address the potential harms to victims of violent crime, especially women and children subjected to domestic violence, who are now afraid to ask for help from the local law enforcement officers who have a duty to protect them.

Senate Bill 2203, SD2 is a limited, focused means to achieve greater transparency and provide a means of accountability for any injury or harm which may be inflicted on the people of Hawaii by federal law enforcement. It is a small step to returning law enforcement in Hawaii to public scrutiny and legal accountability. I urge you to **support SB 2203, SD2** and to vote to pass it out of this committee.

Sinceramente,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Veronica', written in a cursive style.

Veronica Mendoza

Maui Roots Reborn, *Founding Executive Director*

El Pueblo en Accion Maui, *Founding Coalition Member*



HIPHI Board

May Okihiro, MD, MS
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*John A. Burns School of Medicine,
Department of Pediatrics*

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JLI Consulting

Misty Pacheco, DrPH
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Dina Shek, JD
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For Children in Hawai'i*

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Hawaiian Research Office*

Danette Wong Tomiyasu, MBA
*Retired, Hawai'i State Department of
Health*

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community-Based Research &
Evaluation

Community Health
Worker Initiatives

Environmental Health

Hawai'i Climate Change and Health
Working Group

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol-Free Coalitions

Hawai'i Immunization Coalition

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective/Healthy Aging &
Community Living

Public Health Workforce Development

Date: April 1, 2026

To: Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Re: Support for SB 2203 SD2, Relating to Law Enforcement

Hrg: April 2, 2026 at 2:00 PM in Conference Room 325

Hawai'i Public Health Institute¹ (HIPHI) **supports SB 2203 SD2**, which bans law enforcement from using a mask or face covering.

The methods and tactics used by immigration enforcement agents have led to serious injuries, deaths² and false imprisonment³ for many citizens and immigrants around the nation. It's necessary we take steps to provide a more safe environment for all who live within our borders.

Safety for All and Accountability

Banning masks for law enforcement will help provide a more safe environment for interacting with immigration agents by helping to be able to identify them. Being able to identify these agents will ensure they can be held accountable for their actions, increasing the chances that the interaction will be conducted lawfully.

Reducing Risk of Impersonation

As we saw recently here in Hawai'i, the opportunity to impersonate immigration agents exists if they are not clearly identifiable. A group of masked people could be anyone.

Local residents should not have to guess as to whether the person they're interacting with is actually a law enforcement officer. A law enforcement officer should not have to interact with residents who aren't sure if they're law enforcement officers.

¹ Hawai'i Public Health Institute's mission is to advance health and wellness for the people and islands of Hawai'i. We do this through expanding our understanding of what creates health of people and place, fostering partnerships, and cultivating programs to improve policies, systems, and the environments where people live, learn, work, age, and play.

² [Trump's DHS immigration enforcement officers have shot 14 people since September. Here's what to know.](#) NBC News. January 16, 2026.

³ [Court Orders ICE To Stop Unlawful Arrest And Detention Of Refugees.](#) International Refugee Assistance Project. January 28, 2026.



This lack of identification instills fear in the local community, leading many to call local police to intervene as they believe a kidnapping by a private citizen might be occurring.⁴

Providing Trust

Situations that can lead to arrest, injury, or death require the utmost belief in a just system by our residents. Ensuring that law enforcement agents can be identified helps to build trust rather than confusion. This is one of the many reasons why 21 Attorneys General around the nation, including Hawai'i Attorney General Anne Lopez, have asked for a ban on masked and unidentifiable agents.⁵

We can provide a safer environment for all of our residents by passing these highly recommended reforms. Thank you for standing with our community during these ever-changing threats to our health and well-being.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Nate Hix'.

Nate Hix
Director of Policy and Advocacy

⁴ [Masked and Unidentifiable: The Risks of Federal Law Enforcement Operating Without Identification](#). Center for American Progress. August 28, 2025.

⁵ [Letter to Congress on ICE Mask Legislation](#). July 15, 2025.



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2203, SD2 - RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Rep. David Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: April 2, 2026 | Letter Date: April 1, 2026

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

The Legal Clinic (TLC) supports SB2203, SD2 which promotes transparency, accountability, and trust in law enforcement by prohibiting officers from wearing masks while on duty and interacting with the public, subject to clear and appropriate exceptions.

TLC is a nonprofit organization that works to advance justice for immigrants in Hawai'i through immigration legal services, community education, and policy advocacy. We co-lead the steering committee of the Campaign for Immigrant Justice alongside the Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights and the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i. Fairness, due process, and safety for all Hawai'i residents are core values of our work.

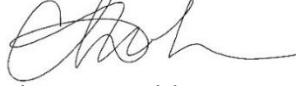
SB2203, SD2 affirms a fundamental principle of policing in a democratic society: law enforcement officers exercising authority over the public should be readily identifiable and operate with openness and accountability. For the communities TLC serves – many of whom are immigrants, survivors of crime, or individuals with limited English proficiency – clear identification of law enforcement is especially critical to safety and trust. Officers who obscure their identities without a clear operational necessity can create fear, confusion, and distrust.

Over the past year, we have witnessed countless examples of masked federal agents conducting immigration enforcement raids that have undermined public confidence and sown terror in communities across the country. Moreover, a string of serious crimes committed by masked impersonators, including robberies, kidnappings, and assaults, recently prompted even the Federal Bureau of Investigation to issue a bulletin urging actual immigration enforcement agents to clearly identify themselves.

SB2203, SD2 appropriately responds to growing concern about masked enforcement actions while providing reasonable exceptions to ensure officer safety and effectiveness. TLC acknowledges the amendments made in this measure include exemptions from masking restrictions for plainclothes officers if they are within eyesight of another unmasked officer from the same agency. Though we understand the reasoning, we note the amendments may present implementation challenges and we encourage additional training and internal guidance to prevent confusion.

Even as amended, however, Senate Bill 2203, SD2 continues to advance key public safety goals of transparency and trust in law enforcement, and we urge the Committee's support. Mahalo for your leadership in considering this important measure.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of The Legal Clinic and
Board President Amefil Agbayani,



Christina Sablan

Community & Policy Advocate



Committee: Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, April 2, 2026, at 2:00 PM
Place: Conference Room 016 & Videoconference
Re: **Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in SUPPORT of, and offering amendments to SB2203, SD2: Relating to Law Enforcement**

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and Committee Members:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i (ACLU-HI) writes in **support of SB2203, SD2**, which establishes the offense of use of a mask or personal disguise by a law enforcement officer. **We respectfully request this bill be amended to include a requirement that officers also wear identification.**

In Minnesota and throughout the continent, we have witnessed President Trump's growing police force employ secret tactics, including ordering masked law enforcement agencies and military troops into cities. Federal agents are taking our immigrant neighbors. In Hawai'i, we have seen this occur in Kaua'i, for example.¹ Immigration enforcement has spiked in Hawai'i as compared to previous years: between January 20, 2025 and October 15, 2025, detainers nearly doubled, administrative arrests more than tripled, and detention stays nearly tripled, as compared to the same period in 2024.² We know that throughout the country, most people being held in detention have not been convicted of a crime.³

We are all less safe when masked agents are in our streets. Troops and secretive armed federal police in our streets create fear, making people afraid to show up to work, send their children to school, or go to the doctor. When people fear law enforcement, they are less likely to report crimes, seek help, or cooperate with law enforcement.⁴ We need

¹ Leonard, Matthew. (2026, January 6). *Hawai'i ICE Arrests and Detentions in 2025 Spiked From Year Before*. Honolulu Civil Beat. <https://www.civilbeat.org/2026/01/hawaii-ice-arrests-detentions-2025-far-exceed-2024/>

² Hausman, David. 2025. "U.S. Immigration Enforcement Data." *Calif. L. Rev. Online* 16 (13).

³ *Id.*

⁴ Elisa Jácome, The effect of immigration enforcement on crime reporting: Evidence from Dallas, *Journal of Urban Economics*, Volume 128, 2022, 103395, ISSN 0094-1190, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jue.2021.103395>; Wong, T.K., Shklyan, K., Isorena, A., & Peng, S. (2019). The

to ensure that law enforcement agents are transparent, accountable, and trustworthy. We support that mask bans should apply to *all* law enforcement operating in the state—not just federal law enforcement.

The lack of identification makes it difficult for ordinary people, local law enforcement, and public officials to differentiate genuine law enforcement actions from impersonators exploiting the situation to harm our community members. It also makes it difficult to identify who is behind operations that may employ aggressive tactics, result in constitutional violations, or cause community harm. **We therefore request that the measure be amended to also cover the failure to display proper identification.**

While Hawai‘i’s police departments may not typically engage in the practice of extreme masking, we believe that this legislation is necessary to ensuring community safety. It is our kuleana to protect our neighbors’ rights to live without fear.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Mandy Fernandes
Policy Director
ACLU of Hawai‘i

With more than 4,000 Hawaii-based members, the mission of the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai‘i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the United States and Hawai‘i State Constitutions through legislative, litigation, and public education work. The ACLU of Hawai‘i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai‘i has been serving our communities in Hawai‘i for over 60 years.

impact of interior immigration enforcement on the day-to-day behaviors of undocumented immigrants. *US Immigration Policy Center*, 1-27.

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai‘i
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www.hicir.org | Instagram @hicir
hicoalitionforimmigrantrights@gmail.com

In Support of SB 2203 SD2

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs (JHA)

Hearing: April 2, 2026

Chair and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

The Hawai‘i Coalition for Immigrant Rights (HCIR) submits this testimony in strong support of SB 2203 SD2, which establishes a criminal offense for law enforcement officers — federal, state, and local — who wear a mask or facial covering that conceals or obscures their facial identity while interacting with the public in the performance of their duties.

THE BILL AS AMENDED: WHAT SD2 DOES

SB 2203 SD2 reflects a careful, deliberate refinement through the Senate process. The bill now:

- Applies to all law enforcement — federal, state, and local — making clear that no agency operating in Hawai‘i is exempt from this accountability standard;
- Focuses the offense precisely on coverings that "conceal or obscure the officer's facial identity while interacting with the public," avoiding overbreadth while reaching the conduct that matters;
- Preserves essential operational flexibility through three targeted exceptions: (1) officers engaged in an authorized undercover assignment or operation, or conducting related duties in support of such an operation — an important expansion that protects support personnel; (2) officers within the eyesight of an unmasked officer from the same agency; and (3) officers operating motorcycles or other helmet-required vehicles, who must remove the covering as soon as reasonably practicable.

The Senate Judiciary Committee's decision to expand the undercover exception to cover support personnel — not just the primary undercover officer — reflects real responsiveness to law enforcement operational concerns. This is a bill drafted with care, not one written for symbolism alone.

WHY THIS BILL IS NECESSARY

When law enforcement officers are masked and unidentifiable, accountability disappears. Immigrant and mixed-status communities in Hawai‘i cannot tell the difference between a masked



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state officer and a masked federal immigration agent. That ambiguity creates fear, enables impersonation, and erodes the community trust that makes effective public safety possible.

This is not hypothetical. Hawai‘i has seen a dramatic surge in federal immigration enforcement: between January 20, 2025 and October 15, 2025, detentions nearly doubled, administrative arrests more than tripled, and detention stays nearly tripled compared to the same period in 2024. Masked, unidentified agents operating from unmarked vehicles — refusing to show badges or judicial warrants — have become a feature of this enforcement surge, not an aberration. Residents have no way to verify whether someone asserting authority over them is a lawfully acting officer, a federal agent acting unlawfully, or an impersonator.

The communities HCIR serves are already living with this fear. Families are afraid to go to work, keep children home from school, and avoid medical care. When that fear is compounded by the inability to identify who is at the door or on the street, due process collapses entirely.

SB 2203 SD2 creates a criminal enforcement mechanism — giving the accountability standard real force. Rather than relying solely on internal disciplinary processes, this bill empowers prosecutors and the Attorney General to enforce the prohibition as a criminal offense.

THE BILL IS TARGETED AND LEGALLY SOUND

The Senate Judiciary Committee voted 4-1 to advance this measure with amendments. The committee's findings — that transparency reduces excessive force, misconduct, and escalation; that masking enables impersonation; and that residents must be able to assess an officer's credibility — are well-grounded in both research and Hawai‘i's lived experience.

The explicit inclusion of federal officers in the bill's definitions is appropriate and intentional. The Hawai‘i County Council unanimously passed Resolution No. 399 in December 2025 calling on the state to prohibit exactly this conduct. SB 2203 SD2 answers that call.

California's No Secret Police Act (SB 627, effective January 1, 2026) establishes national precedent by applying the same standard statewide. Hawai‘i joining this framework protects residents and supports the responsible officers — the majority — who have nothing to hide.

SB 2203 SD2 works in tandem with SB 3322 SD2 HD1, also before this Committee, which establishes the broader written policy framework, civil immigration interrogation limits, and DLE compliance structure. SB 2203 provides the criminal offense provision — the enforcement mechanism that gives the entire accountability framework meaningful teeth. We urge the Committee to advance both measures.



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This Committee is the final stop for SB 2203 SD2. The bill advances only if JHA acts. The Senate passed this measure with bipartisan support and meaningful amendments that addressed real operational concerns. It arrives in the House in its strongest and most carefully crafted form.

Visible identification of law enforcement is not a radical proposition — it is the foundation of constitutional governance and democratic policing. Hawai‘i has never normalized secret policing. SB 2203 SD2 makes that commitment permanent and enforceable.

We respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB 2203 SD2 favorably and without delay.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify.

Contact: Liza Ryan-Gill Hawai‘i Coalition for Immigrant Rights (HCIR) lryangill@hicir.org

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 1:55:07 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aaron Ruddick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2203 SD2

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 2:19:21 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **strong support** of SB2203, which establishes the offense of use of a mask or facial covering by a law enforcement officer. This measure addresses a fundamental principle of democratic policing: that those who wield the power of the state should be identifiable to the communities they serve.

The Problem: Masking Undermines Trust and Safety

When armed officers operate in public spaces while concealing their identities, community members cannot readily distinguish between legitimate law enforcement and impersonators. This creates confusion, fear, and vulnerability—particularly in immigrant and mixed-status communities that already face heightened anxiety around law enforcement.

We have seen this problem play out in real time. Recently, federal agents have begun using masks and facial coverings during immigration raids. This practice does not enhance safety; it undermines it. When residents cannot identify who is approaching them, they cannot assess credibility, cannot comply with lawful orders, and cannot seek help when needed. Instead, they retreat into fear and uncertainty.

Law enforcement agencies themselves routinely warn the public about individuals impersonating officers. Masking makes impersonation far easier. A badge alone—easily counterfeited—becomes the only point of identification when faces are hidden. This is a recipe for abuse, confusion, and danger.

The Evidence: Transparency Reduces Harm

Research and decades of policing practice demonstrate that transparency reduces the likelihood of excessive force, misconduct, and escalation. When officers are identifiable, accountability is possible. When officers are anonymous, accountability disappears. This is not speculation; it is the foundation of community policing and public trust.

SB2203 ensures that when law enforcement officers interact with the public in the performance of their duties, they do so with their faces visible—unless a legitimate, narrowly tailored exception applies.

What SB2203 Does

This bill creates a clear, enforceable standard:

- **Establishes the offense of use of a mask or facial covering** by a law enforcement officer who conceals their identity while interacting with the public in the performance of their duties.
- **Applies to federal, state, and local law enforcement officers**, ensuring consistent standards across all agencies operating in Hawai'i.
- **Includes reasonable exemptions** that preserve legitimate law enforcement needs while maintaining transparency. The bill exempts:
 - Undercover officers, whose work inherently requires identity concealment.
 - Officers within the eyesight of another officer from the same agency who is unmasked, preserving the ability to support undercover operations while ensuring some identifiable presence.
 - Officers operating motorcycles or other vehicles requiring helmets, provided they remove the mask or facial covering before and after operation as soon as reasonably practicable.

These exemptions are narrowly tailored to address genuine operational needs without creating a blanket loophole that would swallow the rule.

Why This Matters for Hawai'i

Hawai'i communities deserve to know who is policing them. Our immigrant and mixed-status families deserve the security of being able to identify the armed officers who approach them. Our neighborhoods deserve the assurance that those claiming to be law enforcement are exactly who they say they are.

This bill does not impede legitimate law enforcement work. It simply restores a basic expectation of transparency: that those who carry the authority of the state are recognizable to the public they serve.

Trust between communities and law enforcement is essential to public safety. That trust is built on transparency, accountability, and the simple ability to identify who is acting with the power of the state. SB2203 strengthens that trust by ensuring that officers interacting with the public do so with their faces visible.

I urge this Committee to pass SB2203 and affirm that in Hawai'i, law enforcement serves the people openly, accountably, and without anonymity.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 5:14:16 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Jaworowski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. It is unconscionable that legitimate law officers hide their faces from the public.

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 6:19:55 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tina Even	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of this bill.

Thanks

Tina Marie Even

Indivisible Member

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 6:41:25 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Younghee Overly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for this opportunity to support SB2203 which would ban masking by law enforcement.

Younghee Overly, a member of Indivisible Hawaii

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 7:03:02 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tim Huycke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a retired police officer, I very strongly support SB2203. It is reprehensible that a person cannot identify what agency a law enforcement officer is with or what an officers name (or at least identification number) is. Without being able to be identified by wearing a mask, a rogue police officer could get away with committing policy violations and crimes. Rogue police officers should be held accountable so that they can be removed from the law enforcement profession.

Good police officers should support this bill to rid the profession of bad officers and reinforce the good reputation law enforcement has among most people. Good police officers should realize they are accountable for their actions to the public and should be proud of what they do.

Only thugs try to conceal their identity. Being a police officer is risky, but police officers should not be so afraid of the public they protect and serve that they refuse to be able to be identified by that same public.

Police officers are only allowed to detain people they have reasonable suspicion to believe committed a specific offense and can only detain that person for a maximum of 20 minutes. State-certified police officers have no authority to enforce federal law.

I urge your support of this bill and thank you for your time.

3/31/26

House Committee and Hawaii Affair

Chair Rep. David A Tarnas

Vice Chair Rep. Mahina

Support for SB 2203 SD2

Aloha Chair Rep David A Tarnas and Vice Chair Rep. Mahina and Members of the Committee

Waipahu Safe Haven Immigrant/Migrant Resource Center serves as a vital hub for social and educational services for immigrant and migrant families in the core of Waipahu. Every day, we work with individuals who already face significant barriers, including language access, fear, and limited understanding of their rights.

I strongly support SB2203, as it helps protect our immigrant and migrant communities from having their rights violated by individuals presenting themselves as ICE agents or law enforcement who are masked or otherwise unidentifiable. This creates fear, confusion, and vulnerability within our communities, especially among families who may not fully understand their legal rights.

Ensuring that enforcement officers are clearly identifiable is a basic but critical safeguard. It builds trust, prevents abuse, and helps community members distinguish between legitimate authorities and potential bad actors.

For the families we serve, transparency and accountability are essential to maintaining a sense of safety and trust. SB2203 is an important step in protecting the dignity and rights of all residents in Hawai'i.

I urge you to support SB2203 SD2.

Sincerely,

Barbara Tom, Director

Waipahu Safe Haven Immigrant/Migrant Resource Center

98-1854 Mikinolia Place

Aiea, HI 96701

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 8:29:21 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Burns	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony of Sarah Burns

In SUPPORT of SB2203 SD2

Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair

Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: April 2, 2026

Dear Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe, and members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Sarah Burns and I submit this testimony in support of SB2203 SD2, which establishes a criminal offense for a law enforcement officer who uses a mask or facial covering while performing their duties, with defined exceptions for undercover operations (where an unmasked officer from the same agency is present within eyesight), motorcycle officers (who must remove coverings as soon as reasonably practicable), and legitimate protective equipment.

As a working woman and commuter in the city, I feel masked agents present a real and credible threat, as our own FBI has warned that there have been instances of officer impersonation leading to the kidnapping and sexual assault of female victims as well as robberies and other crimes. (<https://abc7.com/post/fbi-warns-people-impersonating-ice-agents-to-commit-violent-crimes/18123387/>). It is an erosion of public trust to have to wonder "Is this masked man a true law enforcement officer or do I have the right to defend myself?"

When law enforcement officers are masked and unidentifiable, accountability disappears. For immigrant and mixed-status communities in Hawai'i — who may be unable to tell the difference between a masked state officer and a masked federal immigration agent — this ambiguity creates fear, enables impersonation, and erodes the community trust that makes public safety possible.

SB2203 SD2 addresses this directly by making the use of facial coverings by law enforcement a criminal offense, giving Hawai'i prosecutors and the Attorney General an enforceable standard rather than a policy that can be quietly ignored.

The bill is carefully and practically crafted. The exceptions for undercover operations, motorcycle officers, and legitimate protective equipment show that this measure was designed with real operational needs in mind, not just symbolic politics. California enacted a similar law effective January 2026 — Hawai'i joining that standard affirms our state's commitment to transparent, accountable law enforcement. The Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs is the single and final referral for this bill. I urge the Committee to advance it toward final passage.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Committee PASS SB2203 SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Sarah Burns

Kaimuki, 96816

Eileen Cain
720 Mahi'ai St., Apt. E
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96826-5635
eileencaïn808@gmail.com
March 31, 2026

Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair, Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Aloha, Representatives,

I am submitting this testimony in support of SB2203 SD2 "Relating to Law Enforcement."

Arrests and Due Process: Arresting officers in Hawai'i (and elsewhere) need to be **legally required to identify themselves. Hiding their identity is un-American.** Wearing black masks that cover the face is no better than the wearing of white hoods by the Ku Klux Klan to hide their identities. **If arresting officers are legitimate, they need to be identified and identifiable.**

Officers cannot be permitted to hide their identity when they make an arrest and then claim that they do so for "privacy." (They only get to have privacy when they're not working.) The gestapo-like tactics that have been used during immigration raids are un-American. We in Hawai'i need to know who is making an arrest and what the charges are, and that the arrest is carried out with a warrant signed by a judge.

Due Process is also guaranteed under the Constitution for everyone. If anyone is denied due process, then everyone could lose their right to due process. We are all at risk. Everyone has a right to legal counsel and a chance to plead their case, just as Donald Trump himself had when he was charged with crimes. He always had due process. Everyone needs due process.

It is praiseworthy that this bill "Establishes criminal offenses for improper facial coverings and lack of visible identification and unauthorized civil immigration interrogation, arrest, or detention." These protections are sorely needed here in the islands.

Please vote for **SB2203 SD2.**

Mahalo,

Eileen Cain,
Mō'ili'ili, Honolulu, Hawai'i

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:04:02 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Belinda Pate	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB2203 SD1 both personally and as a member of the Indivisible Hawaii Statewide Network (IHSN). This bill creates a new misdemeanor offense for the use of a mask or face covering by a law enforcement officer in the performance of their duties. There are limited exceptions to account for masking or hiding identity for health reasons, undercover work and certain circumstances involving safety of the officer.

For months we have seen video evidence of aggressive, heavily armed federal agents snatching people off the street, subjecting them to excessive force, and now committing unjustified killings. During nearly all of these events the presumed agents are masked, with no identifying badge or tag. There is really no precedent for this kind of “secret” force in the United States, except the Ku Klux Klan. The tactic heightens fear in the public and interferes with accountability for misconduct by the officers.

Senate Bill 2203 SD1 is a limited, focused means to achieve greater transparency and provide a means of accountability for any injury or harm which may be inflicted on the people of Hawaii by federal law enforcement. It is a critical piece of our State’s preparations for dealing with a lawless federal government. It is a small step to returning law enforcement in Hawaii to public scrutiny and legal accountability. I urge you to pass this out of committee, and to work for passage through the legislature.

I urge you to pass SB2203 SD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important bill.

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:36:04 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully request that the Committee PASS SB2203 SD2.

When law enforcement officers are masked and unidentifiable, accountability disappears. For immigrant and mixed-status communities in Hawai‘i — who may be unable to tell the difference between a masked state officer and a masked federal immigration agent — this ambiguity creates fear, enables impersonation, and erodes the community trust that makes public safety possible. SB2203 SD2 addresses this directly by making the use of facial coverings by law enforcement a criminal offense, giving Hawai‘i prosecutors and the Attorney General an enforceable standard rather than a policy that can be quietly ignored.

The bill is carefully and practically crafted. The exceptions for undercover operations, motorcycle officers, and legitimate protective equipment show that this measure was designed with real operational needs in mind, not just symbolic politics. California enacted a similar law effective January 2026 — Hawai‘i joining that standard affirms our state’s commitment to transparent, accountable law enforcement. The Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs is the single and final referral for this bill. I urge the Committee to advance it toward final passage.

Mahalo

Jen Lum, 'Ewa Beach

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:39:47 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brodie Lockard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 6:03:05 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lois Langham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The way things have been dealt with by ICE agents leads one to believe they'd want to hide behind a mask. This is America. This is the Aloha state. When an unidentified, masked person accosts you, you don't know if it's an official or some random goon. Maybe if they weren't masked, they wouldn't act like goons!

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 6:41:42 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Bonk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB2203 SD1 both personally and as a member of the Indivisible Hawaii Statewide Network (IHSN).

Senate Bill 2203 SD1 is a limited, focused means to achieve greater transparency and provide a means of accountability for any injury or harm which may be inflicted on the people of Hawaii by federal law enforcement. It is a small step to returning law enforcement in Hawaii to public scrutiny and legal accountability. I urge you to pass this out of committee, and to work for passage through the legislature.

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 7:04:36 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James E Raymond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you. I am a member of Indivisible Windward.

Testimony of In SUPPORT of SB2203 SD2

Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: April 2, 2026

Dear Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe, and members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Jeremiah Brown and I submit this testimony in **support of SB2203 SD2**, which establishes a criminal offense for a law enforcement officer who uses a mask or facial covering while performing their duties, with defined exceptions for undercover operations (where an unmasked officer from the same agency is present within eyesight), motorcycle officers (who must remove coverings as soon as reasonably practicable), and legitimate protective equipment.

In Minnesota and elsewhere, we have witnessed how the ICE and Border Patrol have been employing secret police tactics, including sending masked law enforcement agencies and military troops into cities. Federal agents have been terrorizing communities on the continent without accountability and there's no reason to think it couldn't happen here. When law enforcement officers hide their identities while doing their jobs, they feel emboldened to use excessive force and violate people Constitutional rights.

When law enforcement officers are masked and unidentifiable, accountability disappears. For immigrant and mixed-status communities in Hawai'i, who may be unable to tell the difference between a masked state officer and a masked federal immigration agent, this ambiguity creates fear, enables impersonation, and erodes the community trust that makes public safety possible. SB2203 SD2 addresses this directly by making the use of facial coverings by law enforcement a criminal offense, giving Hawai'i prosecutors and the Attorney General an enforceable standard rather than a policy that can be quietly ignored.

The bill is carefully and practically crafted. The exceptions for undercover operations, motorcycle officers, and legitimate protective equipment show that this measure was designed with real operational needs in mind, not just symbolic politics. California enacted a similar law effective January 2026 and Hawai'i joining that standard affirms our state's commitment to transparent, accountable law enforcement. The Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs is the single and final referral for this bill. I urge the Committee to advance it toward final passage.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Committee **PASS SB2203 SD2**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Jeremiah Brown
Waialua, Oahu

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 7:42:22 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lily Troy MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT SB2203! No masks for law enforcement EVER

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 7:52:20 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
john savino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT SB2203

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 7:57:21 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen Dickson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB2203 SD. This bill creates a new misdemeanor offense for the use of a mask or face covering by a law enforcement officer in the performance of their duties. There are limited exceptions to account for masking or hiding identity for health reasons, undercover work and certain circumstances involving safety of the officer.

For months we have seen video evidence of aggressive, heavily armed federal agents snatching people off the street, subjecting them to excessive force, and now committing unjustified killings. During nearly all of these events the presumed agents are masked, with no identifying badge or tag. There is really no precedent for this kind of “secret” force in the United States, except the Ku Klux Klan. The tactic heightens fear in the public and interferes with accountability for misconduct by the officers.

Senate Bill 2203 SD1 is a limited, focused means to achieve greater transparency and provide a means of accountability for any injury or harm which may be inflicted on the people of Hawaii by federal law enforcement. It is a critical piece of our State’s preparations for dealing with a lawless federal government. It is a small step to returning law enforcement in Hawaii to public scrutiny and legal accountability. I urge you to pass this out of committee, and to work for passage through the legislature.

I urge you to pass SB2203 SD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important bill.

Kathleen "Kate" Dickson, Waikiki 96815

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 8:11:22 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Ball	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas and Vice Chair Poepoe,

I am writing in strong support of SB2203. We have seen alarming national coverage of the dangers that anonymity can have for our law enforcement officials, many of whom serve our communities bravely and responsibly. The reckless actions of this federal administration, however, demand that we strive for absolute transparency and accountability from those pledged to enforce our laws. This bill has my strong support, and will only strengthen our community's faith and trust in our local law enforcement officers as well. Mahalo nui loa for your and the committee's strong support of good government, ethics, and accountability legislation throughout this session.

Sincerely yours,

David Ball

Waialae-Kahala

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 8:15:48 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judith Mura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT SB2203 SD2

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 8:28:40 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG OPPOSE!!!

It has reached to point where law enforcement officers need to use face coverings and anonymity for their safety and their family's safety. Law enforcement officers are not respected like before. They are identified and harrassed (doxxed).

Are you saying unmasked bad people don't impersonate officers?

We need laws that mandate cooperation between agencies, not laws that encourage division. Then, local law enforcement can assist federal officers so the feds can do their job and LEAVE! If local law enforcement would at least provide crowd control then maybe people wouldn't get killed.

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 8:58:19 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jesse Hutchison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm writing in strong support. Thank you!

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 9:26:05 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and JHA Committee members,

As a local resident concerned with public safety, I write in strong **support of SB2203 SD2**, which establishes a criminal offense for a law enforcement officer who uses a mask or facial covering while performing their duties, with defined exceptions for undercover operations (where an unmasked officer from the same agency is present within eyesight), motorcycle officers (who must remove coverings as soon as reasonably practicable), and legitimate protective equipment.

When law enforcement officers are masked and unidentifiable, accountability disappears. For immigrant and mixed-status communities in Hawai‘i — who may be unable to tell the difference between a masked state officer and a masked federal immigration agent — this ambiguity creates fear, enables impersonation, and erodes the community trust that makes public safety possible. SB2203 SD2 addresses this directly by making the use of facial coverings by law enforcement a criminal offense, giving Hawai‘i prosecutors and the Attorney General an enforceable standard rather than a policy that can be quietly ignored.

The bill is carefully and practically crafted. The exceptions for undercover operations, motorcycle officers, and legitimate protective equipment show that this measure was designed with real operational needs in mind, not just symbolic politics. California enacted a similar law effective January 2026 — Hawai‘i joining that standard affirms our state’s commitment to transparent, accountable law enforcement. The Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs is the single and final referral for this bill. I urge the Committee to advance it toward final passage.

Please pass this measure.

Mahalo,

Thaddeus Pham

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 9:34:24 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gail Morrison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB2203 SD1 both personally and as a member of the Indivisible Hawaii Statewide Network (IHSN). This bill creates a new misdemeanor offense for the use of a mask or face covering by a law enforcement officer in the performance of their duties. There are limited exceptions to account for masking or hiding identity for health reasons, undercover work and certain circumstances involving safety of the officer.

For months we have seen video evidence of aggressive, heavily armed federal agents snatching people off the street, subjecting them to excessive force, and now committing unjustified killings. During nearly all of these events the presumed agents are masked, with no identifying badge or tag. There is really no precedent for this kind of “secret” force in the United States, except the Ku Klux Klan. The tactic heightens fear in the public and interferes with accountability for misconduct by the officers.

Senate Bill 2203 SD1 is a limited, focused means to achieve greater transparency and provide a means of accountability for any injury or harm which may be inflicted on the people of Hawaii by federal law enforcement. It is a critical piece of our State’s preparations for dealing with a lawless federal government. It is a small step to returning law enforcement in Hawaii to public scrutiny and legal accountability. I urge you to pass this out of committee, and to work for passage through the legislature.

I urge you to pass SB2203 SD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important bill.

Gail Morrison, Honolulu

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 9:35:53 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
amy agbayani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. It will increase safety, accountability and confidence among communities.

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 11:27:56 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in strong favor of SB2203 with some reservations. I believe the provision for medical masks is too vague, and could lead to a loophole that can be easily exploited.

Besides that, I believe codifying that it is against state law for law enforcement to be masked is a good idea. I strongly disagree with what I have seen with certain federal law enforcement masked up to the point where they are unidentifiable except for a rough description of demographics. I have always wondered how people would be able to distinguish between them and random criminals intending to do them harm. I certainly believe we should have our own state law on our side to protect our local police officers and our populace at large to require these individuals to be easily identified.

I also believe that they should be carrying identification, just as police officers do, so concerned citizens can write down badge numbers and similar identifying information. There is no reason why when carrying on street operations that are observable by the public as we have seen, that ICE and other federal officers should not be held to the same standards as our local police officers.

Mahalo for taking the time to consider my views.

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 11:37:26 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roger Hamada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My interactions with local law enforcement generally, and with the Kapolei PD specifically, have been positive. Please support continued positive public perceptions of local law enforcement and transparency and accountability by other law enforcement agencies through passage of SB2203 SD2.

Thank you for accepting my testimony on this important bill.

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 11:41:19 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christian Marquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe, and members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Christian Marquez, and I submit this testimony in support of SB2203 SD2, which establishes a criminal offense for a law enforcement officer who uses a mask or facial covering while performing their duties, with defined exceptions for undercover operations (where an unmasked officer from the same agency is present within eyesight), motorcycle officers (who must remove coverings as soon as reasonably practicable), and legitimate protective equipment.

When law enforcement officers are masked and unidentifiable, accountability disappears. For immigrant and mixed-status communities in Hawai'i — who may be unable to tell the difference between a masked state officer and a masked federal immigration agent — this ambiguity creates fear, enables impersonation, and erodes the community trust that makes public safety possible. SB2203 SD2 addresses this directly by making the use of facial coverings by law enforcement a criminal offense, giving Hawai'i prosecutors and the Attorney General an enforceable standard rather than a policy that can be quietly ignored.

The bill is carefully and practically crafted. The exceptions for undercover operations, motorcycle officers, and legitimate protective equipment show that this measure was designed with real operational needs in mind, not just symbolic politics. California enacted a similar law effective January 2026 — Hawai'i joining that standard affirms our state's commitment to transparent, accountable law enforcement. The Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs is the single and final referral for this bill. I urge the Committee to advance it toward final passage.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Committee PASS SB2203 SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Christian Marquez

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 12:10:56 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcela Montalto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I super strongly support this bill

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 12:18:38 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Otaguro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe, and members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Lynn Otaguro and I submit this testimony in **support of SB2203 SD2**, which establishes a criminal offense for a law enforcement officer who uses a mask or facial covering while performing their duties, with defined exceptions for undercover operations (where an unmasked officer from the same agency is present within eyesight), motorcycle officers (who must remove coverings as soon as reasonably practicable), and legitimate protective equipment.

When law enforcement officers are masked and unidentifiable, accountability disappears. For immigrant and mixed-status communities in Hawai‘i — who may be unable to tell the difference between a masked state officer and a masked federal immigration agent — this ambiguity creates fear, enables impersonation, and erodes the community trust that makes public safety possible. SB2203 SD2 addresses this directly by making the use of facial coverings by law enforcement a criminal offense, giving Hawai‘i prosecutors and the Attorney General an enforceable standard rather than a policy that can be quietly ignored.

The bill is carefully and practically crafted. The exceptions for undercover operations, motorcycle officers, and legitimate protective equipment show that this measure was designed with real operational needs in mind, not just symbolic politics. California enacted a similar law effective January 2026 — Hawai‘i joining that standard affirms our state’s commitment to transparent, accountable law enforcement. The Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs is the single and final referral for this bill. I urge the Committee to advance it toward final passage.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Committee **PASS SB2203 SD2**.

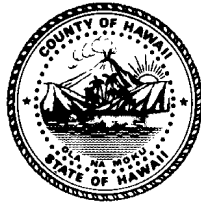
Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Lynn Otaguro

Honolulu, Hawaii

Jennifer Kagiwada
Council Member District 2 South Hilo



Office: (808) 961-8272
jennifer.kagiwada@hawaiicounty.gov

HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL - DISTRICT 2

25 Aupuni Street • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

DATE: April 1st, 2026
TO: House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
FROM: Jennifer Kagiwada, Council Member
Council District 2
SUBJECT: SB 2203

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

I am writing to you in strong support of SB 2203. Please see the attached recently passed, Resolution 399 Draft 2 from the Hawai'i County Council urging the State of Hawai'i to protect individuals against unconstitutional acts committed by federal immigration agencies. SB 2203 addresses the concerns from our community regarding federal agents concealing their identities through the use of nonmedical masks, which is in alignment with the priorities outlined in the attached resolution.

This law would improve the overall trust and safety between law enforcement and the public in Hawai'i. I ask that you **pass SB 2203**.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenn Kagiwada".

Jenn Kagiwada

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 2:13:18 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Bellamy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

ICE officers should to be identifiable as are all other law enforcement officers and should adhere to our democratic values that promotes transparency and accountability to the public they serve.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/1/2026 2:37:16 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

HEARING:

Thursday, April 2, 2026 at 2:00 pm

Via Videoconference and Conference Room 325

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2203, SD2 - RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT.

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christine Andrews, and I live in Wailuku, Maui. I am writing today in **support of SB2203, SD2**. Relating to Law Enforcement. I strongly support SB2203, SD2 because it:

- Creates a criminal enforcement mechanism: the facial covering prohibition is prosecutable by Hawai'i prosecutors, it is not just a policy that can be ignored.
- Prevents impersonation and abuse: communities can verify who is exercising authority — critical when federal and state officers operate in the same spaces.
- Practical exceptions show real operational needs were addressed: undercover, motorcycle, protective equipment.
- California's No Secret Police Act (effective Jan. 2026) sets national precedent. Hawai'i can lead in the Pacific.

I have been an attorney licensed in Hawaii for over 25 years. I currently volunteer as a Know Your Rights and constitutional protector trainer and educator statewide. I have helped train teachers and students, business owners and union members, faith leaders and health care providers, parents and senior citizens on what their constitutional rights are, that these rights apply to all within the United States, regardless of citizenship status, and how to ensure these rights are not violated. I have also trained them how to prepare themselves, their staff, and their places of work and community service for interactions with federal agents.

The images we see on the news and in social media of aggressive, untrained, and violent unmasked, unbadged persons attacking citizens and noncitizens alike is eroding trust in law enforcement and our government. In my capacity as a volunteer educator, I have heard concerns that victims of sexual and domestic violence, some of our most vulnerable community members, are afraid to call local law enforcement for assistance because they now do not trust law enforcement. I have heard from health care providers that fear of lawless, violent, unmasked and unidentified persons is making people afraid to leave their homes to seek necessary medical care.

As a lawyer with an understanding of the Constitution and who has taken an oath to uphold it and the rule of law, what I am witnessing nationwide is chilling. Seeing images of the murder of people engaged in lawful, constitutionally-protected activity has impacted my mental health. As a woman and mother, I am afraid of being targeted by unmasked, unbadged government agents or imposters. I am afraid that they will take my picture and find out who I am, where I live, and come to my house and harm not just myself but my loved ones. I would ask that this bill be amended to ensure that law enforcement does not use license-plate identifying technology, so that I do not have to fear hostile and lawless agents tracking my activities and endangering the community members I serve. I almost hesitated to submit testimony in support of this bill for fear of retaliation. This is how far we have fallen in the direction of authoritarianism, that people like me fear speaking up for basic, civil protections such as unmasked and properly-identified federal agents.

I am an educated, privileged, white person. I, like millions of others, have chosen to use my privilege to stand up for and protect my neighbors and community members. People like me are being killed for it. Yet I am

undeterred by the deaths of Renne Goode and Alex Pretti. I am inspired, and millions are standing alongside me. The government agents who killed Alex Pretti felt empowered to engage in violence openly and with impunity because they felt protected from accountability because they were masked and unidentified. This bill provides important protection for volunteers like me and for community members who no longer trust their law enforcement agents of any kind.

I request that you support SB 2203, SD2 and help restore rule of law, instill respect on the part of law enforcement, rebuild trust in government, and protect the rights not just of noncitizens, but of citizens like me engaged in Constitutionally-protected activity..

Thank you for siding with your community on this issue.

Mahalo,

Christine L. Andrews, J.D.
Wailuku, Maui

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 9:49:09 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Winternitz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony of Elizabeth Winternitz

In SUPPORT of SB2203 SD2

Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair

Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: April 2, 2026

Dear Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe, and members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Elizabeth Winternitz, and I submit this testimony in support of SB2203 SD2, which establishes a criminal offense for a law enforcement officer who uses a mask or facial covering while performing their duties, with defined exceptions for undercover operations (where an unmasked officer from the same agency is present within eyesight), motorcycle officers (who must remove coverings as soon as reasonably practicable), and legitimate protective equipment.

When law enforcement officers are masked and unidentifiable, accountability disappears. For immigrant and mixed-status communities in Hawai‘i — who may be unable to tell the difference

between a masked state officer and a masked federal immigration agent — this ambiguity creates fear, enables impersonation, and erodes the community trust that makes public safety possible. SB2203 SD2 addresses this directly by making the use of facial coverings by law enforcement a criminal offense, giving Hawai‘i prosecutors and the Attorney General an enforceable standard rather than a policy that can be quietly ignored.

The bill is carefully and practically crafted. The exceptions for undercover operations, motorcycle officers, and legitimate protective equipment show that this measure was designed with real operational needs in mind, not just symbolic politics. California enacted a similar law effective January 2026 — Hawai‘i joining that standard affirms our state’s commitment to transparent, accountable law enforcement. The Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs is the single and final referral for this bill. I urge the Committee to advance it toward final passage.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Committee PASS SB2203 SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Winternitz, Kula Maui

ewinrus@gmail.com

SB-2203-SD-2

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 11:34:49 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dianne Deauna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony of Dianne Deauna

In SUPPORT of SB2203 SD2

Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair

Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: April 2, 2026

Dear Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe, and members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Dianne Deauna, and I submit this testimony in **support of SB2203 SD2**, which establishes a criminal offense for a law enforcement officer who uses a mask or facial covering while performing their duties, with defined exceptions for undercover operations (where an unmasked officer from the same agency is present within eyesight), motorcycle officers (who must remove coverings as soon as reasonably practicable), and legitimate protective equipment.

I am testifying as an individual that has worked on community organizing and as an immigrant.

When law enforcement officers are masked and unidentifiable, accountability disappears. For immigrant and mixed-status communities in Hawai‘i — who may be unable to tell the difference between a masked state officer and a masked federal immigration agent — this ambiguity creates fear, enables impersonation, and erodes the community trust that makes public safety possible. SB2203 SD2 addresses this directly by making the use of facial coverings by law enforcement a

criminal offense, giving Hawai'i prosecutors and the Attorney General an enforceable standard rather than a policy that can be quietly ignored.

The bill is carefully and practically crafted. The exceptions for undercover operations, motorcycle officers, and legitimate protective equipment show that this measure was designed with real operational needs in mind, not just symbolic politics. California enacted a similar law effective January 2026 — Hawai'i joining that standard affirms our state's commitment to transparent, accountable law enforcement. The Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs is the single and final referral for this bill. I urge the Committee to advance it toward final passage.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Committee **PASS SB2203 SD2**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Dianne Deauna

Hawai'i Filipinos for Truth, Justice and Democracy