

Submitter: Heather Hellman
On Behalf Of:
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Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4138

I support requiring law enforcement to be identifiable and unmasked. As a pastor I have been working closely with people impacted by ICE and have spent a lot of time near the facility as a chaplain. There are many mega agitators that wear similar tactical gear and face coverings to ICE. It is hard to tell them apart, especially in the community. I understand why someone would panic and attempt to drive away or resist the orders of ICE agents, they look like any other armed militia group. Having a group of people kidnap neighbors and not knowing if they are legitimate law enforcement or another group is very dangerous. I think their masking also puts local law enforcement at higher risk as local law enforcement has to confront these groups to determine if they are ICE or not. They also have to respond to kidnapping calls because people are not sure if what they are witnessing is ICE, so it is slowing down our local law enforcement resources as well.

Unfortunately any of us involved in helping our neighbors or protesting are subject to the risk of doxing. ICE and other law enforcement sign up for a job with risk, but they also are given weapons of deadly force, that demands more transparency. Law enforcement at all levels need to be unmasked and identifiable both for the safety of citizens, other law enforcement and for accountability.