

Subject Wearing masks in public

Authors Finkie

Analyst Jeff Diebel

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Summary

This bill modifies the statute that bars the wearing of masks and other items that disguise a person's identity in public. Under current law, the prohibition does not apply to a person covering their face based on religious beliefs, incidental to amusement/entertainment, for protection from weather, or for medical treatment. The bill adds to this list of exceptions wearing a mask for protection from smoke, gas, or other airborne toxin.

Current law does not exempt law enforcement officers from complying with the prohibition on wearing masks in public unless one of the above-referenced exceptions apply. The bill proposes authorizing law enforcement officers to wear masks in the following limited circumstances:

- 1) while undercover and concealment of the officer's identity is necessary to preserve the integrity of the investigation or the officer's safety; and
- 2) while serving on a tactical response team and a face mask will substantially reduce a known risk of serious, permanent disfigurement to the officer's face.