Res. No. 1155

Resolution calling on the United States Congress to pass, and the President to sign, S.2212/H.R.4667, also known as the Visible Identification Standards for Immigration-Based Law Enforcement Act of 2025, or VISIBLE Act, in relation to displaying visible identification during public-facing immigration enforcement actions.

By Council Member Hudson, Avilés, Powers, Won, Hanif, Krishnan and Banks

Whereas, Images and videos of anonymous and masked agents conducting immigration enforcement has become a terrifying symbol of the vast and unrestricted authority of federal immigration authorities under the Trump Administration; and

Whereas, An early example of federal immigration agents conducting operations anonymously was during the March 2025 arrest of Tufts University student Rümeysa Öztürk who was taken off the street by plainclothes officers, some of whom were also masked; and

Whereas, Öztürk later shared in a sworn statement that because of the anonymity of the officers, she originally believed she was being abducted, and a bystander began filming the arrest because of a similar belief; and

Whereas, *CalMatters* referred to the presence of masked federal agents as "an unnerving part of life in Southern California this summer"; and

Whereas, In New York City, masked federal agents waiting outside courtrooms to arrest immigrants pursuing legal pathways and attending mandatory court hearings have become normal sights in federal courthouses; and

Whereas, In a recent article by *Chalkbeat* on immigrant children in a New York City school, the students referenced the constant fear they have of being grabbed off the street by a masked person; and

Whereas, The anonymity of federal immigration enforcement agents has seemingly emboldened them to act with impunity; and

Whereas, In July 2025 article from *ProPublica*, they noted nearly 50 documented instances in the prior six months of immigration agents, many of them masked, smashing through vehicle windows; and

Whereas, In a recent letter from a coalition of attorneys general to members of Congress, there were numerous references to incidents of federal immigration agents performing arrests without identifying themselves, in masks, plainclothes, and unmarked vehicles; and

Whereas, *The Intercept* shared a video of an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officer disguised as a construction worker and refusing to share what agency he worked for while trying to persuade the individual filming the video to roll down the window or get out of the car; and

Whereas, In Los Angeles, a United States citizen was monitoring the operations of masked federal immigration agents in plainclothes and unmarked vehicles and was subsequently violently arrested by the agents, was not told where she was going, was detained overnight, and then released without any charges; and

Whereas, Videos and images continuously depict anonymous agents conducting violent and warrantless arrests for the purposes of immigration enforcement; and

Whereas, The immigration agents' actions have been vigorously defended by the White House, and the federal government has claimed these officers must mask for their own safety citing an increasing number of assaults on immigration officers; and

Whereas, However, a deeper look at this claim by *The New Republic* shows that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is inaccurately characterizing this data; and

Whereas, The Secretary of DHS has publicly referred to the filming of officers as "assault," suggesting the data may need to be further scrutinized to understand what justifies an assault on a federal immigration officer; and

Whereas, DHS originally charged New York City Comptroller Brad Lander with assaulting an

immigration officer before video evidence proved that this charge was false and showed the officers violently arrested the Comptroller after he asked masked agents where their judicial warrant was for the individual being escorted from his immigration court hearing; and

Whereas, Legal experts have expressed concern that masks, lack of identification, and plainclothes of federal immigration officers will inevitably lead to bad actors impersonating agents and inflicting serious or irreparable damage; and

Whereas, *PBS* found there have been arrests of people posing as immigration officers to carry out assaults and robberies, and in Florida an individual posed as an ICE agent to kidnap an ex-boyfriend's wife; and

Whereas, S.2212, introduced by Senator Alex Padilla [D-CA], and pending in the United States Senate, and H.R.4667, introduced by Representative Vicente Gonzalez [D-TX-34], and pending in the United States House of Representatives, amend section 287 of the Immigration and Nationality Act to require all immigration enforcement officers to display visible identification during public-facing immigration enforcement actions and to promote transparency and accountability; and

Whereas, S.2212/H.R.4667, also known as the Visible Identification Standards for Immigration-Based Law Enforcement Act of 2025, or VISIBLE Act, applies to any officer authorized to perform immigration enforcement functions, including United States Customs and Border Protection and ICE; and

Whereas, The VISIBLE Act requires officers performing immigration enforcement functions to display their agency information and last name or badge number in a manner clearly visible and readable during direct engagement with the public; and

Whereas, The VISIBLE Act also bans the use of non-medical face coverings, including masks or balaclavas, that cover identifying information or faces; and

Whereas, The activity of immigration agents over the past several months have been referred to as dystopic, the actions of secret police, and comparable to kidnappings and the VISIBLE Act is necessary to improve public safety and increase accountability of officers who are terrorizing immigrants and their

communities; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on United States Congress to pass, and the President to sign, S.2212/H.R.4667, also known as the Visible Identification Standards for Immigration-Based Law Enforcement Act of 2025, or VISIBLE Act, in relation to displaying visible identification during public-facing immigration enforcement actions.

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