OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 20 2025

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am signing Senate Bill 627, which would make it a crime for specified law enforcement officers to wear masks when carrying out their duties. The bill also requires law enforcement agencies to adopt policies prohibiting the unnecessary use of masks, with specified exemptions, by July 1, 2026.

Acting on behalf of an authoritarian President, federal immigration authorities are spreading fear and terror throughout California with indiscriminate raids that have rounded up American citizens, people legally in the United States, working parents, and even children. America should never be a country where masked "secret police" grab people off the streets and throw them into unmarked vans and speed away. It is unacceptable that government agents, guns in hand, have seized our neighbors while wearing masks under the pretense of protecting themselves when they are, in fact, hiding from public accountability and sowing fear to intimidate the American people. For the safety of both the public and law enforcement, Californians must know that they are interacting with legitimate law enforcement officers, rather than masked vigilantes.

This bill establishes important transparency and public accountability measures to protect public safety, but it requires follow-up legislation when the Legislature returns in January. Given the importance of this issue, the Legislature must craft a bill that prevents unnecessary masking without compromising law enforcement operations. That means providing additional exemptions for legitimate law enforcement activities and removing unnecessary liability for officers who carry out their duties in good faith. In its current form, I read this bill as permitting the

use of motorcycle or other safety helmets, sunglasses, or other standard law enforcement gear not designed or used for the purpose of hiding anyone's identity, but the follow-up legislation must also remove any uncertainty or ambiguities around its scope.

With these changes, Californians will be provided with the transparency required of law enforcement in any free society, while allowing them to effectively perform their duties.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom