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Los Angeles County Seeks Mask Ban for Federal Agents, Citing Public Safety Concerns

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The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has approved a motion directing legal counsel to explore ways to restrict federal agents from wearing face coverings during public interactions in certain areas of the county. The measure is aimed at preventing impersonation of law enforcement officers, following multiple reports of individuals posing as federal agents.

Supervisor Janice Hahn, who introduced the motion, referenced a *CBS News* report confirming that at least a dozen people across the United States have recently been

arrested for impersonating U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. Hahn stated, “We need to ensure people know exactly who is knocking on their door.” The motion proposes that all law enforcement officers, including federal personnel, be required to display visible identification and avoid covering their faces when engaging with the public in unincorporated parts of Los Angeles County.

Legal experts note that enforcing such a policy on federal officers may face constitutional limitations. The anti-commandeering principle of the Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution prohibits state and local governments from issuing directives that control federal operations.

John Malcolm, Vice President of the Heritage Foundation’s Institute for Constitutional Government, said, “The County has no authority to dictate how federal officers carry out their duties.” Federal agencies have stated that personnel may wear masks in specific circumstances to protect their identities, particularly during operations involving organized crime or high-risk individuals.

Los Angeles County has previously adopted policies that reduce cooperation with federal immigration authorities. In that context, the new motion has drawn attention for its potential to affect interagency coordination.

The Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security have not issued public statements regarding the motion. Should Los Angeles County attempt to enact a binding policy, analysts expect it may be subject to judicial review based on constitutional grounds and federal supremacy.

The motion currently remains under legal evaluation.