

TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chair
Judiciary Committee

FROM: Leslie Ford Weber
Associate Director, Maryland Government Affairs

DATE: February 9, 2024

RE: HB547 Crime of Violence - Educational Facilities, Medical Facilities, and Places of
Worship - Penalty (Sacred Places Safety Act)

Johns Hopkins supports **HB547 Crime of Violence - Educational Facilities, Medical Facilities, and Places of Worship - Penalty (Sacred Places Safety Act)** This bill recognizes the disparate impact of acts of violence on victims and witnesses when they are committed in places of learning, faith and comfort, and healing.

Workplace violence is a particular concern for our employees at all four Johns Hopkins Health System hospitals in Maryland. At our Maryland hospitals, Johns Hopkins has seen increases in reported violent assaults year after year. The most common site is the emergency department, but no area of the hospital is immune. Hundreds of employees are directly affected and the impacts extend to their colleagues and family members.

Our physicians and nurses are trained to enhance their situational awareness of potentially violent settings and to de-escalate heated encounters, yet the number and severity of injury from patients and family members is increasing. Our team members should be able to approach every patient with compassion unmitigated by fear.

Accordingly, Johns Hopkins respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on **HB547**.