

I am a resident of Baltimore city. I support Senator Jill Carter's SB0276, which would repeal the legislation giving Johns Hopkins University permission to found its own private, armed police department. I also believe we should give Michael Harrison the chance to do the plan we hired him to do.

My reasoning is as follows:

1. There is no evidence that this police force will be effective in reducing crime and making Baltimore safer. There is overwhelming evidence that armed police create violence, particularly against Black citizens. This has been made even more public this year with the deaths, at police hands, of Black citizens such as Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, etc. The problems with American policing far predate these tragedies and the answer is not more policing.
3. Baltimore community members strongly oppose the police force, a fact which Hopkins has consistently ignored. I do not want us to drive further wedges between (majority-white) Hopkins and the (majority-Black) Baltimore community by pushing through this immensely unpopular initiative.
4. More specific to university policing: We do not want avoidable tragedies such as the shooting of a University of Chicago student by a U of C police officer in 2018 (<https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/breaking/ct-met-university-of-chicago-police-shooting-20180404-story.html>).

We are in a long-overdue moment of national reckoning about race and policing. Let's take the opportunity to move forward rather than doubling down on militant violence.