

My name is Nicole Carter, and I am a PhD Candidate in Biochemistry, Cellular, and Molecular Biology at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. I am writing in support of SB0276, which would repeal legislation allowing Johns Hopkins University to establish a private police department. My Black, Latinx, and Indigenous peers have consistently said that the private police force is a threat to their safety on campus. Many of these students have already experienced racial profiling and harassment from Johns Hopkins security officers, and those experiences will only worsen with armed police officers patrolling campus. Furthermore, the establishment of a university police force will increase policing in the areas surrounding Johns Hopkins campuses. As the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Eric Garner, Philando Castile, and many others have shown, interactions with police are dangerous and often deadly for Black Americans, including those who have not committed crimes and have no criminal record. There is also a lack of evidence that policing is an effective strategy for crime prevention. Finally, the private police force raises a host of accountability issues, as this would be the first time a private university in Maryland was permitted to have its own police force.

I therefore strongly support the repeal of the Johns Hopkins private police force. I urge the university to re-invest these funds in holistic, community-centered approaches to public safety, such as Safe Streets and Baltimore Ceasefire.

Sincerely,

Nicole Carter