

I am writing in support of repealing the charter/ability of Johns Hopkins University to create its own police force. As a student and employee of Johns Hopkins, many of us have been vocal in our support of keeping JHUs campus safe, however I do not believe more police are the solution. The decisions to enact and create a JHU private police force was done behind closed doors, without any input from students or faculty, but instead were handled in a top-down dictatorial manner. This is undemocratic, and will only serve to further divide JHU from its surrounding community while building tensions and stoking fires. In addition, these police would have authority over JHU property off campus as well, which continues to grow as JHU expands into its surrounding communities. I do not think the solution to JHU's, and by extension Baltimore City's, concerns of safety can be addressed with more guns, body armor, and handcuffs. Already, students have been profiled, harassed, and unduly hassled by JHUs private, unarmed, security force; and I cannot imagine that situation will improve once the authority and armament of badge carrying, state sanctioned, police become part of the equation. There is a lack of accountability, and Johns Hopkins has failed to demonstrate adequate need for this police force (which will certainly cost quite a bit to fund) and provided little to justify its current stance following the past several years of calls seek alternative forms of community policing and security.