



January 21, 2021

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.

Chairman, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

2 East, Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: SUPPORT of Senate Bill 276**

**(Johns Hopkins University - Police Department - Repeal)**

Dear Committee Chair Smith and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

We at the Baltimore Asian Resistance in Solidarity (BARS) are writing to you in support of SB0276, to repeal the Johns Hopkins University police department. We believe the Maryland Senate should act swiftly to bring this legislation to a vote and to repeal the establishment and maintenance of a Johns Hopkins University police department, including all applicable authorizations, powers, requirements, and prohibitions on the University, University police officers, the Baltimore Police Department, and the Department of Legislative Services.

Formed in response to police brutality against Michael Brown and Freddie Gray, Baltimore Asian Resistance in Solidarity (BARS) brings together Asians and Pacific Islanders of all backgrounds in Baltimore to work in solidarity with our neighbors and the communities we share: Black, Indigenous, all people of color, workers, LGBTQIA+, women, disabled folks, incarcerated people, immigrants and refugees. We represent an essential sub-population of the Johns Hopkins University community; justice-oriented Asian and Pacific Islander alum, students, staff, and faculty. However, our members, such as our South Asian members, have also been unfairly targeted by law enforcement in the name of anti-terrorism initiatives since 9/11. Because our liberation is tied together, we cannot support the creation of a private police force to further endanger and criminalize our Black and Brown neighbors, friends, and colleagues. **It is our obligation to support SB 276 and the repeal of the Johns Hopkins University police force.**



# BALTIMORE ASIAN RESISTANCE IN SOLIDARITY

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this legislation and provide the following recommendations that we believe will strengthen it.

- **Ensure that Johns Hopkins University will not be permitted to establish a police force in the future.** Incidents of police brutality against residents in cities like Baltimore, continue to occur across the nation while the efforts toward police reform and accountability have been weak and ineffective. To date, Johns Hopkins has shown no meaningful acknowledgement of the petition from over 6,000 Baltimore city residents, University faculty and students, against the police force. Johns Hopkins University Administration must be held accountable to the steps it has taken to form a private armed police force. It is critical to ensure that once its established police force has been repealed, Johns Hopkins University will be prohibited from establishing a similar police force or department or granting certain police powers to certain employees in the future.
- **Expand the scope of the bill to include private institutions of higher education across the state.** Delegate Ivey has introduced legislation, HB0336, which would repeal the Hopkins Police and the Police Forces of Other Private Institutions of Higher Education, to ensure that private colleges and universities across the state will be prohibited from establishing or maintaining a private police force. Like in Baltimore city, Black and Brown residents, staff, and students across the state should feel safe and remain shielded from an unwarranted - or deadly - encounter with the police, whether they reside on campus or in the communities surrounding a university or college campus.

BARS respectfully requests the Committee give this measure a favorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about Baltimore Asian Resistance in Solidarity or this position, please contact [baltimoreasianresistanceinsolidarity@gmail.com](mailto:baltimoreasianresistanceinsolidarity@gmail.com).

Best regards,

Baltimore Asian Resistance in Solidarity