

Testimony in SUPPORT of SB0276

I am a JHU alum (BA and MSE) and I am submitting this testimony to urge you to SUPPORT SB0276, Johns Hopkins University – Police Department – Repeal.

The Johns Hopkins (JH) private police department is not supported by our communities. The resistance to the police force has been overwhelming since it was first proposed in March 2018. Over 100 faculty members have penned a letter opposing it. At the height of the protest against the police department, community members staged a 35-day sit-in in which hundreds of students participated on a rolling basis, according to Homewood Faculty Assembly's Fact Finding Committee [report](#). The school's own Student Government Assembly voted to formally support the sit-in. A referendum in which over a third of undergraduate students participated found that over 70% were opposed. Following the uprising against police brutality throughout this summer, Johns Hopkins announced that they would be delaying the police force by two years. After that announcement a new petition garnered over 6,000 signatures from community members and neighboring organizations calling for JHU to abandon the police force altogether.

Baltimore is already heavily over-policed by a corrupt and unaccountable police department that regularly terrorizes our communities. Today the ACLU released a [report](#) on police violence and complaints of misconduct that found that there were 13,392 complaints of misconduct filed against 1,826 BPD officers and 22,884 use of force incidents from 2015-2019. The last thing we need is another police department, let alone one formed by Johns Hopkins, that would hire from BPD, as it has already done in the past. Several former BPD officers are now officers with JH Campus Safety & Security. Even the former VP for Security, Melissa Hyatt, was a BPD veteran for over 20 years. There are several problems with racial profiling already in JH's security department. They should focus on that before trying to create an armed private police force. The Garland Sit-in group has recently submitted evidence of violent, white supremacist beliefs espoused by two JH security officers which they made known on their public Facebook profiles. Their Office of Institutional Equity has not taken any transparent action regarding this. Their only response has been saying they could not disclose "personnel matters."

When white supremacists attacked the sit-in, JH security did nothing to prevent the attack and their Office of Institutional Equity did nothing over the course of a year to hold a JH security officer that attacked a student accountable (here is a [video](#) of the incident). You can read more about the failure of Hopkins security in the damning fact-finding report linked earlier (page 29). Having a private armed police force would disproportionately harm immigrants, people of color, gender and sexual minorities, the homeless, the disabled, and other marginalized groups. I personally know people who have been harassed and profiled by JH security, and they have shown that they are already incapable of addressing our grievances.

JH has a fraught relationship with the Middle East community as well. Over the years, JH has made many promises to the Middle East area around the medical campus, including the Minority Inclusion Agreement, which in 2002 promised 8,000 new jobs and a community reinvestment fund in East Baltimore. As of 2019, JH has created about 1,500 new jobs—20% of

what they promised. Instead, JH broke their promises while still forcibly removing 742 families from their homes. Instead of investing in more police, JH should invest in communities and proven public health based strategies for reducing crime, like their own School of Public Health's experts advise.

Thank you for reading and considering my testimony.