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Esteemed Senators,

My name is Ian Richter. I am an alumnus of The Johns Hopkins University, and have lived at various locations in the neighborhoods surrounding the Homewood and Peabody campuses for more than eight years. At present, I run past the Homewood campus more days than not. Thus, I do not believe it is a stretch to say that I am the sort of person to whom a private police force controlled by the university is expected to appeal, and whom such a force would be expected to protect. On the contrary: I am repulsed by the idea of such a police force, and I do not want its protection.

What would such a force actually do, if created? A charitable observer might suggest that it would use violence and the threat of violence to protect the community surrounding Johns Hopkins from violence by outsiders. A realistic observer will notice that the previous formulation glosses over a few uncomfortable truths. Firstly, a privately-operated police force will not be accountable to the community in which it operates. If the Baltimore City Police, who are at least indirectly accountable to the citizens of Baltimore, have difficulty treating our citizens equitably, why should we expect a force with even less community oversight to be more responsive to community needs? We should not. A police force funded by The Johns Hopkins University will place the interests of the university above those of unaffiliated community members. Secondly, how exactly will members of the University-funded police determine who is a legitimate target for their violence? They will make snap judgements in the moment based on who "fits the profile" of someone who is affiliated with the university, and therefore enjoys its protection, versus someone with no affiliation, who therefore does not belong. It is likely that community members of color will bear the heaviest burden of suspicion, through no fault of their own. And this will happen, even if the individual officers all operate in good faith. The immense gap in power and privilege between the university and many of the community members living nearby provides ample opportunity for implicit bias to color an officer's judgement, despite that officer's best efforts to the contrary. And, yes, the same problems will plague any attempt to police the communities in which The Johns Hopkins University operates, regardless of who does the

policing. However, an organization that is more directly accountable to the citizenry will be more likely to address these issues of equity than one without any such incentive to do so. We should not hang our hopes for the security of the community as a whole on the benevolence of an institution that has, at best, only a partial interest in the welfare of its neighbors.

If a private police force does provide increased security for the university itself, it will do so at the cost of increased risk to the most vulnerable members of the neighboring communities - those most likely to be seen as not belonging near the immaculate marble and red brick of the university campus. There is no justice in that. We cannot, in good conscience, pile additional burdens on those least able to bear them for the marginal benefit of those who are already comfortable.

Thank you for your attention. I sincerely hope that you all will find the righteousness and clarity of thought to support Senator Carter's proposal to repeal the authorization for The Johns Hopkins University to establish a private police force.

Yours respectfully,
Ian Richter