

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB0276

Jan 19, 2021 • Dave Heilker (Dist 43) • davidj.heilker@gmail.com

To Senator Smith, esteemed Chair, Senator Carter, sponsor, and the assembled members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

My name is Dave Heilker.

I am a resident of Baltimore City. And I am here to ask you to **vote to repeal the powers granted in 2019 to Johns Hopkins University by voting for Senator Carter's bill: SB0276** — because We Belong in a City with representatives who listen to residents.

In April of 2018, I worked in the Mayor's Office of Communications, I was invited to attend a roundtable discussion called "BMore College Town." At this discussion, communications people from each of the colleges with a footprint in Baltimore City were looking for a solution to a common problem: *Parents of incoming students didn't think Baltimore was safe.*

As we heard about the current efforts of each of these schools, all of them shared a stock response: "We tell the parents that **Baltimore City might not be safe, but our campus is.**"

Make no mistake: **Johns Hopkins does not seek a private police force to make Baltimore City safer;** they want to make their campus **appear** safer. Simply put, they have illustrated clearly that they want police power, but lack the responsibility to implement it in a timely and transparent manner. This is simply the culmination of a marketing effort, and we must reject it, fiercely.

This is a school that is known for their exemplary programs in public health, in education, and in public policy, and yet for all of the incredible students and well over 100 faculty members who have spoken out, at terrible personal risk, AGAINST the Campus Police Force:

- JHU has *not* sought to treat the violence in our City as a public health crisis.
- JHU has *not* sought to educate communities on how a less accountable private police force could negatively impact their children.
- JHU has *not* built public TRUST into their public policy.

We belong in a City that doesn't promise \$10 million in tax dollars to a school with a four-and-a-half BILLION dollar endowment. We belong in a City where the women and men we trust with our votes can be trusted to fight these battles year after year instead of relying on the people who are most vulnerable and most at risk of falling victim to aggressive & racist policing to, once again, take up the responsibility of doing what we elected you to do: to say "**NO!**" unequivocally and unwaveringly to the powerful institutions that seek to purchase power at the expense of The People of Baltimore.

I commend Senator Carter, who is an unyielding champion of justice and civil liberties, for her commitment to seeing an opportunity to correct the wrongs of the very recent past **before** they become a financial, health, and litigious burden on Baltimore.

For Baltimore,



Dave Heilker