

I am a Johns Hopkins faculty member, proud resident of Baltimore City, and physician to patients who work for, study at, and live near Johns Hopkins. I am writing in support of HB1284, which would repeal the legislation giving Johns Hopkins University permission to found its own private, armed police department.

The original legislation, in keeping with the very idea of university private police forces, is based not on evidence that such a police force would be effective (for that is lacking), neither on the expressed will and preference of Hopkins-adjacent communities. These were ignored time and again in the hasty run-up, then abandonment, then final full-throttle force-feeding that led to its approval. Neither is it based on deliberate attention to the critiques of Hopkins faculty, students, staff, or patients (these were met with scorn and opacity). The effect of armed police on neighborhood health was not considered, nor the potential deleterious influence on the hospital that would be under the private police's jurisdiction.

The legislation is a waste of money, time, and attention. We need to place police under community control, not multiply firearms on our city streets based on a model of violent subjugation. Private police forces are even less accountable than the horror show that is the Baltimore City police. Johns Hopkins jammed this legislation down the throat of Baltimore. .It is high time to extract it.