

Dear Chairman Clippinger,

I have been a resident and/or business owner in the Baltimore Midtown Community since 1996 and have been active in civic and neighborhood affairs at various levels. My business is located in the 1700 block of Maryland Avenue which bridges the fringes of Hopkins' Homewood and Peabody campuses and give me a daily view of the Station North Arts District, a neighborhood in transition.

The decade I served on the board of the Midtown Community Benefits District, with two terms as its chairman while representing the Madison Park Neighborhood and where I recently completed terms as President, offered me a unique perspective on the challenges our community faces. Chief among these challenges has been public safety, which remains a paramount concern among residents and business owners alike.

When the prospect of Johns Hopkins University dedicating human and financial resources to support our goals of making the Midtown Community safer by addressing the issues of violent crime, theft and property damage through establishing a policing program was first proposed, I supported wholeheartedly. At that time in my role as Midtown CBD chair, I delivered testimony in the affirmative to this committee encouraging the passage of legislation to support that initiative. Today, in my role as a business owner, I find myself in opposition to HB 336 (Private Institutions of Higher Education - Police Departments - Repeal and Prohibition) and efforts aimed at derailing a well-intentioned effort before it has hardly had time to leave the station.

As I stated in my remarks some two years ago, the need for every willing organization, institution and individual to lend their support to our otherwise under-resourced efforts to ensure the safety of persons and protect property in this community is critical. And while I am painfully aware of the recently reported history tarnishing the legacy of Johns Hopkins University's namesake and most notable benefactor, the recent efforts there to address systemic racism and reforms at the institution give me reasonable assurance that any policing program implemented by JHU will be guided with principles informed by and benefiting from our community input and oversight.

Therefore, I am asking that this committee allow the policing program at JHU the opportunity to demonstrate its value and effectiveness in our community while being monitored and objectively evaluated before it is dismantled without cause.

I thank you for this forum and hope that my comments along with like sentiments will be given full consideration in your deliberation and allow this program to render the support so sorely need by our community.

Respectfully,
Adrian Harpool
Principal
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