

Conor Bean HB 336 MD District 43

My name is Conor Bean and I am a citizen of Baltimore and a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University. I am writing in the strongest support of the revocation of private university police powers. When I first arrived at JHU, I had just come from UChicago and seen firsthand how horrifying a university's private police force can be. They patrolled huge swaths of the primarily black and brown neighborhoods of Chicago's south side like an occupying force. They were not responsible in any way to the community. It took years just to get them to release daily incident reports. They harassed teenagers at the high school I volunteered at. They shot an undergraduate. I would strongly encourage any member of the Judiciary Committee to learn more about what has happened at [UChicago](#) and how universities are structurally incapable of responsibly holding police powers.

JHU will try to tell you that it has developed new big ideas for how to police in the 21st Century. They don't have the answers to fix policing. JHU cannot be allowed to serve as some sort of innovative policing researcher and use Baltimore as a laboratory. I was greatly relieved when JHU announced a two year pause on its police force, but I know very well why they did it. They saw a nation rising up against police brutality and JHU knew the optics were bad. They also know it is simply a matter of time between when they get their police force and when an 'incident' will happen. They think that having two years of distance between whatever that incident winds up being and the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor might let the university get away with a slap on the wrist. Two years will change absolutely nothing substantive about their plan, however. They are just buying time.

I implore you to revoke this police power, in light of everything that has occurred in the last year, and force JHU to participate in credible and equitable service with the city it calls home. A police force will only further entrench the inequality JHU perpetuates. I welcome any good faith effort by the school to help Baltimore, but a private police force simply is not it.

Thank you.