

Alisha Dziarski  
HB1284 – Favorable  
District 46

I am Alisha Dziarski, a resident of Maryland Legislative District 46, writing to you in support of HB1284, to repeal Hopkins's private police.

I was a senior at Yale when Stephanie Washington and Paul Witherspoon were fired upon by a Yale Police Officer and a Hampden Police Officer. There had been a 911 call regarding an armed robbery by a man that evening, but the cruelty that the two involved officers displayed was entirely unhinged. The officers shot into Stephanie and Paul's completely stopped car, injuring Stephanie and putting both of their lives at risk. I can only imagine the trauma they will face by having officers shoot into their car, completely stopped at a stop sign, without any justification at all for the use of force. A gun was not even found in the car upon further investigation, much less a threat of using it against the officers. The Yale Police Officer did not have his body camera on – if accountability and reform measures like body cams are to drain funds from the community and not even be used then they are a momentous loss.

The Hopkins community can avoid going down this tragic path. They can avoid going down the tragic path of the case of Tyrone West, whose life was taken seven years ago by a Morgan State Officer. In 2019, after the shootings of Stephanie and Paul, the New Haven and the Yale communities grieved. Similarly, over 6,152 community members have stated their opposition to the Hopkins police force in [this petition](#) which has still not been acknowledged by Hopkins administration. Not being held accountable to the demands of the community, even at this early stage, is a sign that JHUPD will not be an accountable police force.

The funds that would go to JHPD should instead go into meaningful support of the Middle East community. The could go into fulfilling the promises of the 2002 Minority Inclusion Agreement, which in 2002 promised 8,000 new jobs and a community reinvestment fund in East Baltimore – a promise that has been completely lacking, with only 1,500 jobs created by 2019 and over 700 families forcibly removed. Investing back into the community will be what creates real security, rather than the life-threatening risk of a university private police force.

I am in favor of HB1284, to repeal Hopkins's private police and the police of other private institutions.