

My name is Ren DeBrosse and I am a first year medical student at Johns Hopkins University writing in favor of H1284 to repeal the Johns Hopkins University Police Department. I am also a resident of District 46 and I worked for a Johns Hopkins affiliate on the East Baltimore medical campus for two years prior to matriculating in the School of Medicine. I love this city so much that I decided to spend at least six years of my life here for my scientific and medical training with the Johns Hopkins institution. My relationship with the Middle East community has also grown in that time, as I have done work with the community and consider them family.

Between my personal experience, those of my Black colleagues and listening to residents who have lived in Middle East neighborhood for much longer, I believe that a Hopkins Private Police force will not protect the community and will only lead to further harm. Over 6,125 community members have stated our opposition in [this petition](#) which has still not been acknowledged by Hopkins administration. When a collective voice, made up of so many diverse stakeholders, fails to be recognized by an institution, how can we have faith that a JHU Private Police will take the appropriate accountability measures?

The fears that all of us petition signees have about the formation of Private Police at Hopkins stems from more than our lack of evidence that the institution can be held accountable to the people it claims to serve- it stems from decades of bearing witness to Black people dying at the hands of police across the country. It should go without saying that considering the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade and so many other Black people across the country in 2020 alone, Johns Hopkins should have ended its efforts to form this police force immediately. Instead, the institution put these plans on hold and will continue to pursue this option to exert control over the residents of the communities they disrupt unless our state legislature takes action to repeal the Johns Hopkins University Police.

In addition to the lack of acknowledgement of community voice with regards to the JHU Private Police, Johns Hopkins has also failed to carry through on promises previously made to the Middle East community that would help the neighborhood to realize their goals for wellbeing. These actionable items include the Minority Inclusion Agreement, which promised 8,000 new jobs to Middle East residents in 2002 but only 1,500, 20% of that promised amount, have been created. Meanwhile, Hopkins worked through EBDI to forcibly remove over 700 families from their homes and brought many back to buildings without power.

For a more recent example of lack of accountability to the community, we need look only as far as the recent COVID-19 outbreak on the Homewood campus. Residents who asked how the University would protect their health witnessed this outbreak after off-campus parties. Furthermore, the University has five testing sites on the Homewood campus for Hopkins affiliates but does not offer those services to residents around Homewood. How can the University claim interest in public safety when it is not devoting adequate resources towards making COVID testing accessible for the same neighbors it wishes to police?

What is more, when the Senate Judiciary Committee heard SB0276 to Repeal Hopkins Police on January 21<sup>st</sup>, Connor Scott testifying for JHU said that the police force they desire would be able to make arrests for violent crime in the jurisdiction of their proposed zip codes. This revelation came as a surprise to the senators in the committee, who had noted that the bill grants Hopkins the authority to only respond to non-violent crime. If the delegates of the House Judiciary Committee have not likewise examined what may have changed in their understanding and Hopkins's interpretation of this bill since it was passed, I implore that they check again to see the extent to which JHU plans to exert their power. This further suggests JHU will be non-transparent when it comes to their practices surrounding community safety.

The pending installation of a Hopkins Private Police force stands in the face of a petition over 6000 voices strong, made of community members, students, faculty and staff at JHU and JHMI that refuse to see the force come to fruition. I stand H1284 to repeal the Johns Hopkins University Police Department and I ask you to do the same.