

I am Laura Pugh, a resident of district 46. I am writing to you in support of HB0336, to repeal Hopkins's private police and the police of other private institutions.

I am a Johns Hopkins medical student. I have seen over my 3 years in Baltimore how Hopkins can hold such possibility for healing its community, yet in many cases does the opposite by fostering distrust within the community. In the hospital, I give state of the art care to patients who have many of their health conditions exacerbated by the exact conditions of insufficient housing, police violence, and structural racism that in many instances has been exacerbated by the very institution treating their medical conditions.

Hundreds of medical students voiced their opposition to this police force back when it was first passed. Not to mention the thousands of undergraduate students who opposed it as well. Hopkins claims this force is in students' best interest, but what we want is the safety of our patients and community from being oppressed by an institution that should be focused on educating and healing. Over 6,152 community members stated our opposition to the police force in [this petition](#) which has still not been acknowledged by Hopkins administration. How can we expect the accountability of any future JHUPD if its administration will not even take accountability to deeply listen to, or acknowledge, community members who oppose the formation of the force? Johns Hopkins's actions, which have excluded dissenting voices, including the voices of those who would be most affected by JHUPD, do not bode well for an accountable police force.

The area that private police will be deployed, the Middle East neighborhood, is already heavily policed, and Hopkins security is already a huge presence. Patients feel this, notice this. Outreach efforts have existed but been insufficient to counteract the distrust for many people, and deploying active police to the area in service of students but not residence will only worsen this relationship. Just look at the killing of Tyrone West at the hands of Morgan State police officers and the effect that has had on the community relationship.

Over the years, JHU has made many promises to the Middle East area around the medical campus, including the Minority Inclusion Agreement, which in 2002 promised 8,000 new jobs and a community reinvestment fund in East Baltimore. As of 2019, JHU has created about 1,500 new jobs—20% of what they promised. Instead, Hopkins broke their promises while still forcibly removing over 700 families from their homes.

Research and history show that reform is ineffectual. We've had six years of reform efforts implemented in the wake of the 2014 killings of Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Laquan McDonald, Tamir Rice, and way too many others. Yet, all of that reform didn't save Freddie Gray, or Alton Sterling, or Korryn Gaines, or Walter Scott, or Breonna Taylor, or George Floyd. Reform was not worth those lost lives and it certainly is not worth another.

We want the University to place the funds that were intended for JHPD, and more, in the hands of communities, such as residents of the Middle East near the medical campus. This is what the safety Johns Hopkins claims to desire looks like.

Thank you for your consideration.
Laura Pugh