

September 25, 2022

Written Testimony Re: 22-0132R – Informational Hearing – JHU PD & BPD Draft MOU

Dear Members of Baltimore City Council,

As I am unable to attend the council hearing on Thursday at 1pm, I am submitting this written testimony to share my opposition to Hopkins' draft MOU and to get your answers to questions about the impact of local control on this agreement.

As I am sure you are all aware, Hopkins has been an oppressive force in East Baltimore as long as it has been in existence. It has pushed out Black and Brown residents of Baltimore as part of its' ever-expanding takeover of East Baltimore, displacing residents, renaming and erasing their neighborhoods, and falling far short of keeping promises made to those residents. That's in addition to:

- suing patients who cannot pay for medical care
- paying pennies on the dollar in property taxes to our city
- excluding contract workers from their "Live Near Your Work" incentives
- building a school that they originally intended only for their employees
- knowingly deceiving and exposing families with young children to lead in their 1990's Kennedy Krieger "experiments"
- profiting off of the death of Henrietta Lacks while her family members lived in poverty and without adequate medical care
- allowing the city's highest rates of asthma and lead poisoning to continue literally in their backyard.

I could go on. All of this is well-documented by Donald Gresham, Dr. Marisela Gomez, and other members of the Save Middle East Action Committee, and in books such as Dr. Gomez's Race, Class, Power, and Organizing in East Baltimore, and Antero Pietila's The Ghosts of Johns Hopkins.

This private police force is one more example, one more way that Hopkins exerts its power over our city. Time after time, our leadership at the State and City levels falls in line with supporting Hopkins over the community and this has to stop.

I would like to know the answers to the following questions that came to mind as I reviewed the draft MOU. The MOU names BPD as a State agency. How will the MOU be impacted if the ballot measure for local control passes in November?

The timeline indicates that the MOU, if approved, will be signed in November. Will a new draft be required if BPD is no longer a State agency? Will the city (Mayor & City Council) play a more active role if we get local control? And would that allow us to block the MOU and end private police by not signing on?

I appreciate your time and consideration and look forward to hearing from you.

Gretchen Tome
Resident of Belair-Edison, 13th District