



Legislation Text

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The official copy considered by the City Council is the first reader copy.

Introductory*

City of Baltimore Council Bill R (Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Ramos

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning
Informational Hearing - Johns Hopkins University Police Department and Baltimore City Police Department Memorandum of Understanding

For the purpose of inviting the President of the Johns Hopkins University, the Vice President for Public Safety for the Johns Hopkins University, the Baltimore City Police Commissioner, and relevant members of their staff to brief the City Council on the proposed memorandum of understanding between the Johns Hopkins University Police Department and the Baltimore City Police Department, including a discussion of the enabling state legislation.

During the 2019 legislative session, the Maryland General Assembly passed Senate Bill 789 (SB 789), titled “The Community Safety and Strengthening Act”, which authorized the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) to create a police department (JHUPD). SB 789 also mandated specific training, required compliance with the 2017 Federal Consent Decree, enumerated the powers of this new department, and set boundaries that JHUPD would be allowed to patrol. Beginning in June 2020, JHU paused creation of JHUPD, citing a desire to learn from the “national re-evaluation of policing... brought about by the death of George Floyd” prior to establishing the department. On June 1, 2022, JHU restarted the process of creating JHUPD.

In addition to the aforementioned provisions, SB 789 also requires JHUPD to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Baltimore City Police Department (BPD) to outline how JHUPD would operate and work with BPD. The MOU is supposed to include, but is not limited to, an agreement regarding roles, responsibilities, communications, and standards within JHUPD and between JHUPD and BPD. In August 2022, JHU announced that they would release a proposed draft of the MOU in early September 2022.

The City Council needs to understand the contents of the MOU, including what the MOU requires the City to do, what the MOU requires JHU to do, and how JHUPD will be composed. The City Council also needs to understand any potential impact on BPD personnel and what, if any, liability the City of Baltimore may incur when JHUPD is created.

JHU will provide 3 public meetings for review of the MOU by the public. The Baltimore City Council is also allowed a comment period, and will use this hearing to collect more information in order for Councilmembers to comment based on correct and exhaustive information.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the Baltimore City Council invites the President of the Johns Hopkins University, the Vice President for Public Safety for the Johns Hopkins University, the Baltimore City Police Commissioner, and relevant members of their staff to brief the City Council on the proposed memorandum of understanding between the Johns Hopkins University Police Department and the Baltimore City Police Department, including a discussion of the enabling state legislation.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the President of the Johns Hopkins University, the Vice President for Public Safety for the Johns Hopkins University, the Baltimore City Police Commissioner, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.