



THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

May 1, 2024
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACTS

Tony Nicholas
chris.tomlinson@house.state.md.us
410-841-3359

Sam Jones
justin.ready@senate.state.md.us
410-841-3683

**STATEMENT ON JOHNS HOPKINS CAMPUS PROTESTS FROM SENATOR JUSTIN
READY, DELEGATE APRIL ROSE & DELEGATE CHRIS TOMLINSON**

In the months since Hamas launched their brutal and unprovoked attack on the nation of Israel on October 7th, we have seen an explosion of unruly, student protests that have turned into trespassing encampments at colleges and universities featuring antisemitic rhetoric and activity. This week, this irrational movement based not on reasonable opposition to Israel's policies but on offensive and tired anti-Jewish tropes came to one of Maryland's most valued and renowned institutions, John Hopkins University.

On Monday, pro-Hamas demonstrators began trying to recreate a Columbia-style encampment on campus in protest of the University's financial ties to Israel. Student protestors with covered faces shouting highly offensive slogans such as "from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" which is a chant rooted in the antisemitic desire to cleanse the Israeli territory of all Jewish people.

In response to a list of demands for Johns Hopkins to divest from any investments in Israel (BDS), to stop research for the United States military, and cease a Masters program with Tel Aviv University, the school's leadership posted on their website on Tuesday that they "are pleased to report that we reached an agreement early this morning to support the students' continuing protest" from 10 AM – 8 PM but the so-called "Hopkins Justice Collective" has told media outlets that they are not in agreement and are staying to protect their encampments. (1) (2)

We call on Johns Hopkins University to not entertain this absurd "list of demands" and fully enforce their campus policies around overnight encampments and protests.

As elected officials, we support the 1st Amendment rights of all people to assemble and protest peacefully. However, if students don't follow the rules and comply with lawful orders, there should be swift and certain consequences consistent with the University's code of conduct.

It is not appropriate to take over private property and – while it's within the rights of anyone to demand whatever changes they believe in – attacking and making demands on a private institution that has nothing to do with a war on the other side of the world **that Hamas started** – should be called out for what it is – **ridiculous**.

Unfortunately, this kind of radical, “America/Israel are always wrong” mentality has been fostered for several decades on college campuses. Universities should be a space for young adults to become free thinkers, but it has become very clear that academic leaders in the Higher Education Industrial Complex believe “free thinking” means far-Left, anti-American – and anti-Israel - ideology.

The United States designated Hamas a terror group 25 years ago. The idea of college students on American soil openly giving aid and comfort to a radical Islamic terror group hellbent on destroying our greatest ally in the Middle East should be shocking and sobering to all of us. We urge Johns Hopkins University and all other Maryland colleges to fully enforce their rules surrounding protests on private property and to reject their reckless demands for things like divestment from Israel out of hand.

(1)

https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/education/higher-education/johns-hopkins-protest-HVGAHGO4H5CGHO3EJLZ6JNI46A/?schk=YES&rchk=YES&utm_source=The+Baltimore+Banner&utm_campaign=7daba40210-NL_PMSC_20240430_1827&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-7daba40210-%5BBLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D&mc_cid=7daba40210&mc_eid=3c52e40038

(2)

<https://www.cbsnews.com/baltimore/news/police-wont-break-up-pro-palestinian-protest-at-johns-hopkins-barring-any-credible-threat-of-violence/>