



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Baltimore City District 12 Council Candidate Dave Heilker Statement on Use of Force Against The Garland 7**

In political campaigns, we often hear the proverb “How you campaign determines how you govern,” and that has proven true yet again in the continuing saga of Johns Hopkins University versus The People of Baltimore City.

I’ve spent a lot of 2019 leading digital organizing around police transparency – on the issue of Hopkins’ private police force, organizing more than 500 Baltimore City residents to take action by sending emails to their representatives in Annapolis – but offline, I’ve tried to take my cues from the students of Johns Hopkins.

This morning, those students and our neighbors have shown tenacity and bravery in the face of potentially life-threatening hostility that deserves recognition, but it also deserves our attention as a city. In 2018, three black men died in Central Booking; two of them were being held for nonviolent crimes. We belong in a city that holds the police - public or private - accountable to the people.

We must remain vigilant that Johns Hopkins campaign of abusing power, which now includes the reckless siccing of law enforcement on their own students and members of our community, does not lead to further loss of life.

I will be keeping the Garland 7, consisting of undergrad students Reshmi Patel and Agatha Gilman, graduate students Marios Falaris, and Mariam Banahi, and community activists Opal, Isaac Dalto, and Jarrod Moore in my thoughts, and will call on JHU to drop all charges that may arise out of these or future arrests for peaceful assembly.

Baltimore should commend the peaceful direct action of these brave comrades in the face of violent hostility and injustice.

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*David Heilker is an activist and a community organizer focused on education, police transparency, and social justice. He is a Baltimore City native, and a democratic candidate for Baltimore City Council in District 12.*

*You can contribute to the legal defense fund of the members of the Garland 7 and the Garland Sit In here: [gofundme.com/the-jhu-garland-sitin-freedomcampus](https://gofundme.com/the-jhu-garland-sitin-freedomcampus), and you can learn about the ballot measures to potentially stop the JHU private police at [noprivatepolice.org](https://noprivatepolice.org)*