

Cornell University
University Assembly

U.A. Resolution #2

**Endorsing the Recommendations of the Senior Leaders
Climate Action Group**

[November 1, 2016]

1 **Sponsored by: Linda Copman, Employee Representative; Martin Hatch, Faculty**
2 **Representative; Robert Howarth, Faculty Representative**

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4 **Whereas,** the University administration has endorsed the desirability of achieving carbon neutrality
5 by 2035; and

6 **Whereas,** in March 2016, Provost Michael Kotlikoff charged the Senior Leaders Climate Action
7 Group to analyze alternatives and make recommendations for achieving our climate neutrality goal
8 by 2035; and

9 **Whereas,** in October 2016, the Senior Leaders Climate Action Group, comprised of thought leaders
10 and technical and economic experts from across campus, released its report recommending a variety
11 of measures to reduce our carbon footprint; and

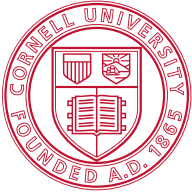
12 **Whereas,** UA Resolution #7, adopted on April 26, 2016, requested that the results of the analysis be
13 formally presented to the University Assembly, with the goal of empowering the assembly to make
14 “specific suggestions to the administration regarding changes in practices and policies” to achieve
15 carbon neutrality by 2035; and

16 **Whereas,** the University Assembly formally considered the findings and recommendations of the
17 Senior Leaders Climate Action Group on October 18, 2016, and it was the consensus of the group to
18 endorse these finding and recommendations; therefore

19 **Be it resolved,** that the University Assembly formally endorses the recommendations outlined in the
20 “Conclusions and Recommendations” section of the Senior Leaders Climate Action Group report,
21 namely:

22 *Build on the success of the Think Big, Live Green campaign and continue to develop and deploy*
23 *training tools to educate the campus on ways each and every member can contribute to*
24 *reducing the energy consumption and the carbon footprint;*

25 *Ensure all students graduate with a basic literacy of climate change – an understanding of their*
26 *influence on climate and its influence on them and society. An educated student body will*
27 *generate and help implement campus solutions, and carry the knowledge of climate-smart*
28 *behaviors and solutions with them after graduation;*



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- 29 *Modify capital projects approval processes to explicitly account for long-term energy savings*
30 *and the quadruple bottom line so as to incentivize higher energy performance in deferred*
31 *maintenance projects, renovations and new construction;*
- 32 *Expand the successful Energy Conservation Initiative and continuous recommissioning program*
33 *to further drive down the energy use of existing buildings through increased investment in*
34 *both, and extending the payback period required for energy conservation projects; and*
- 35 *Prioritize development of infrastructure to support a campus fleet of clean-fuel vehicles and*
36 *replace the existing fleet accordingly.*
- 37 *Pursue cost-effective wind, water, and solar projects to meet or offset 100 percent of the expected*
38 *annual campus electricity demand.*
- 39 *Evaluate the viability of Earth Source Heat as the primary means to heat the campus, including*
40 *aggressively exploring funding sources and drilling a test well as soon as is possible. If by*
41 *2022 Earth Source Heat is determined to be a viable path forward, Cornell should implement*
42 *it as a campus-wide utility. If by 2022 Earth Source Heat appears uncertain or problematic,*
43 *Cornell should move rapidly to develop other approaches for heating the campus, such as*
44 *ground-sourced heat pumps.*