



Student Assembly

Resolution 19: University-Wide Disassociation

Abstract: “We Demand a Fossil-Free Degree”. Cornell’s association with the fossil fuel industry is inconsistent with its role as a “global leader in sustainability”. Given the fossil fuel industry’s injurious impacts on the planet, its influence over research, and Cornell governing organizations’ previous demands for divestment from fossil fuels, this resolution calls for Cornell University to dissociate from fossil fuels and all aspects of the fossil fuel industry.

Authored by: Cornell on Fire, TIAA-Divest!, and Sunrise Cornell (previously Fossil Free Cornell)

Sponsored by: Lani Lin-Kissick ‘28, Lydia Blum ‘27, Christian Tarala ‘27, Dylan Carson ‘28, Aashay Mody ‘29, Samuel Lau ‘29, Tianyi Chen ‘28, Jocelyn Swavy ‘28, Alexander Walters ‘28

Reviewed by: Environmental Committee, 11/30/2025

Type of Action: Recommendation, to be presented to all five governing bodies

Originally Presented: To University Senior Leadership, 05/02/2025

Current Status: Adopted by the Assembly, Unanimous Consent, 12/04/2025

Whereas, each of Cornell’s shared governance [bodies](#) (i.e. the Faculty Senate and the Employee, Graduate and Professional Student, Student and University assemblies) passed resolutions in 2020 ([SA R20](#); [SA R56](#); [GPSA R6](#); [EA R5](#); [UA R5](#); [Faculty R145](#)) calling for the University to divest from fossil fuels on three grounds:

- 1) that fossil fuel companies are “morally reprehensible,” knowingly causing global ecological catastrophe while deliberately casting public doubt on climate science;
- 2) that coal, oil, and gas have “[injurious impacts](#)” on the world we share, causing floods, droughts, wildfires, mass dislocations, and a rapid decrease in biodiversity across the globe;
- 3) the fossil fuel industry’s harms are “inconsistent with the goals and principles of the University” because Cornell presents itself as a “[global leader in climate science and sustainability](#)”, and yet these harms are jeopardizing the futures of the young people whom we teach and train;

Whereas, fossil fuel funding for academic research has been shown to [skew research decisions and results](#) and used to deceptively forestall the transition needed to limit global warming;



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Whereas, the [Cornell University Board of Trustees voted in May 2020](#) to institute a moratorium on investments in fossil fuels because of the serious threat fossil fuel companies pose by perpetuating climate change;

Whereas, in January of 2025, the [Student Assembly called on Cornell](#) to uphold its Climate Renewal Vows and proposed that Cornell accelerate decarbonization efforts and provide accurate overall emissions reporting;

Be it therefore resolved, that Cornell reaffirm its responsibility and [commitment to be carbon neutral by 2035](#) as outlined in the present Climate Action Plan;

Be it further resolved, that Cornell shall resist any efforts by fossil fuel industries to influence higher education, distort climate science, or undermine the University's objective role; .

Be it finally resolved, that, in order to address the climate emergency, Cornell complete the process of [entirely disassociating](#) the University from the influences and ties—especially financial—of the fossil fuel industry, including but not limited to: cutting ties to the coal, oil, and gas profits that flow into the university in the form of donations, new research funding streams, and retirement funds.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lani Lin-Kissick '28
Environmental Committee Member, *Student Assembly*

Lydia Blum '27
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Representative, *Student Assembly*

Christian Tarala '27
Hotel School Representative, *Student Assembly*

Dylan Carson '28
College of Arts and Sciences Representative, *Student Assembly*

Aashay Mody '29
Environmental Committee Member, *Student Assembly*

Samuel Lau '29
Environmental Committee Member, *Student Assembly*

Tianyi Chen '28
Environmental Committee Member, *Student Assembly*

Jocelyn Swavy '28
College of Arts and Sciences Representative, *Student Assembly*



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