

Student Assembly

1 **Resolution 87: Reprimanding the University for** 2 **its Antidemocratic Suppression of Free Speech**

3 **Abstract:** This resolution reprimands the University for recent actions it took to silence students'
4 voices, as reported on by the Cornell Daily Sun on April 15, 2026. It reminds Cornell of its
5 moral commitment to its founding principle of “any person...study” and its incompatibility with
6 actions that suppress free speech.

7 **Authored by:** Alexander Walters '28, Hayden Watkins '28

8 **Sponsored by:** Amelia Lyons '29, Admir Cekic '26

9 **Type of Action:** Sense-of-the-Body

10 **Originally Presented:** 04/23/2026

11 **Current Status:** Adopted by the Assembly, 18-0-0, 04/23/2026

12 **Whereas,** the Cornell Grounds Department is tasked with providing “quality services, consistent
13 with responsible fiscal and environmental stewardship, to support the landscape maintenance and
14 landscape construction needs of the Cornell Community.”, per the department’s website,

15 **Whereas,** “Cornell Days,” otherwise known as “admitted students’ weekend” began the
16 weekend of April 10-12, 2026,

17 **Whereas,** prior to Cornell Days, students wrote political messages critical of University
18 administration and its suppression of free speech,

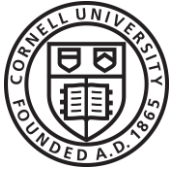
19 **Whereas,** on April 15, 2026, the Cornell Daily Sun reported that the Grounds Department
20 washed away this political messaging,

21 **Whereas,** the messages adhered to the principles and permissions of the Expressive Activity
22 Policy, as bystanders were reported to have informed responding officers on the scene,

23 **Whereas,** Cornell is a university with a long history of claiming respect for democratic values
24 and touts the philosophy of “any person...any study” as central to its mission,

25 **Whereas,** concerted action to silence the voices of students in the name of maintaining the
26 institution’s image violates the University’s mission and serves to justify further antidemocratic
27 action,

28 **Whereas,** admitted students ought to have an accurate view of a university they are considering
29 attending,



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30 **Be it therefore resolved**, the Student Assembly questions the compatibility of removing
31 opposing viewpoints from public conversation with Cornell’s stated mission and respect for
32 democratic values,

33 **Be it therefore resolved**, the Student Assembly condemns the University’s abuse of the
34 Expressive Activity Policy to further its own ends and maintain its appearance,

35 **Be it further resolved**, the Student Assembly calls on Cornell to remember its founding
36 principle of “any person...any study” and respect the right of varying and opposing viewpoints to
37 be discussed on campus,

38 **Be it finally resolved**, that students’ rights to free speech be respected by the University, even in
39 cases in which it is being criticized.

40 Respectfully Submitted,

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42 *Vice President for Communications, Student Assembly*

43 Hayden Watkins ’28

44 *Vice President for Finance, Student Assembly*

45 Amelia Lyons ’29

46 *College of Architecture, Art and Planning Representative, Student Assembly*

47 Admir Cekic ’26

48 *First-Generation College Students Representative, Student Assembly*