



Cornell University Student Assembly

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Type of Action:	Legislation
Status/Result:	New Business

S.A. Resolution #59

Increasing Sustainability and Comfort in Residential Dormitories

ABSTRACT: This resolution seeks to increase student comfort in residential halls and reduce carbon emissions by allowing individual students additional control over the heating/cooling in their room.

Sponsored by: Conor Hodges '18 & Matthew Battaglia '16

Whereas, Article II of the Charter of the Student Assembly states that the Student Assembly has “the authority and the responsibility to examine any matters which involve the interests or concern the welfare of the student community and to make proposals concerning those issues to the appropriate officers or decision-making bodies of the University;” and

Whereas, Article III, § 1 of the Student Assembly Charter states that “The SA will have legislative authority over the policies of the Department of Campus Life;” and

Whereas, roughly 51% of students live on-campus; andⁱ

Whereas, controlling the ambient temperature in a student's room can have a material impact on student comfort; and

Whereas, the Student Assembly has expressed interest in making Cornell more environmentally friendly by reducing wasteful emissions; and

Whereas, room temperature in newer and retrofitted dormitories is computer-controlled; and

Whereas, within these newer dormitories students currently are granted temperature control within a certain temperature bound, typically only $\pm 2^\circ$ around a central temperature (e.g. 70° allows for students to set a temperature between $68-72^\circ$) via a wall thermostat within their room; and

Whereas, in both warm and cool weather some students open windows to warm up or cool off their respective rooms; and

Whereas, this opening of windows decreases the efficiency of building heating & cooling as well as increasing costs and University's carbon footprint; and

Whereas, enabling students to keep their rooms cooler in the winter months and warmer in the summer months does not entail any extra cost in utilities but can increase student comfort; and

Whereas, computer managed climate controls enable easy modification of temperature bounds; and

Whereas, informal discussions with Facilities Management have implied a change in the temperature bounds would likely not materially affect the comfort or energy efficiency of neighboring rooms; and

Whereas, these discussions also implied that any such change would likely be less drastic than what currently results from having windows opened to forcibly modify room temperature; therefore

49 **Be it Resolved**, that the Office of Student and Campus Life Facilities explore changing the temperature
50 bound where technologically feasible to allow students to make their room temperatures colder
51 in the winter and warmer in the summer to allow students more flexibility (e.g. making a winter
52 temperature bound of -4 and +2 or a summer temperature bound of -2 and +4) to increase
53 student comfort, reduce utility costs, decrease carbon emissions, and promote sustainability on
54 campus; and
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56 **Resolved**, that the Office of Student and Campus Life Facilities provide an update concerning the
57 feasibility of the topic by the first Assembly meeting of February 2017; and
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59 **Be it finally Resolved**, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the President, Vice President for Student
60 & Campus Life, & Vice President of Infrastructure Properties and Planning.
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62 Conor Hodges '18
63 *Undesignated At-Large Representative, Student Assembly*
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65 Matthew Battaglia '16
66 *Ex-Officio Member, Student Assembly*
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68 *(Reviewed by: Environmental Committee, 5/2/2016 – 12-0-1)*

ⁱ <http://dos.cornell.edu/off-campus-living>