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Type of Action:	Sense of the Body
Status/Result:	New Business

1           **SA Resolution 45: In Support of GPSA Resolution 13 - Calling For the**  
2           **Accommodation of International Student Leaders at Maplewood Apartments**

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4    ABSTRACT: This resolution calls for Cornell to grant international graduate students equal  
5    opportunities to those of domestic students in public-private housin situation off-campus,  
6    particularly regarding their access to mentorship and leadership opportunities.

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8    **Sponsored by: Christopher Schott '18**

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10   **Whereas**, on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GPSA)  
11   introduced Resolution 13: Calling For the Accommodation of International Students as Leaders  
12   at Maplewood Apartments (GPSA Res 13); and

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14   **Whereas**, GPSA Res 13 is the result of a change in on-campus graduate and professional student  
15   housing to off-campus graduate and professional student housing that resulted in the inability of  
16   international students to serve as paid student leaders in those communities; and

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18   **Whereas**, about 72% of graduate and professional students (GPS) living in University Housing  
19   are international students, a testament to their reliance on on-campus housing as a safe space<sup>1</sup>;  
20   and

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22   **Whereas**, Graduate Community Advisors (GCAs) are GPS who live and work among their peers  
23   in the GPS on-campus communities<sup>2</sup>; and

24  
25   **Whereas**, while a GCA's "primary role is to help create a sense of community within their  
26   respective areas", they also serve as a general resource to all residents and a main point of  
27   contact during emergencies; and

28  
29   **Whereas**, Maplewood Park was an on-campus housing complex built in 1989 had a capacity of  
30   360 beds for graduate and professionals students that closed at the end of the 2015 - 2016  
31   academic year; and

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33   **Whereas**, Maplewood Park was an attractive housing option for graduate and professional  
34   students as it was family-friendly both in price and programming, walking distance from  
35   campus, promoted community building/support, had global leadership, and had payment/deposit  
36   options that are adjusted to Cornell's payroll calendar; and  
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<sup>1</sup> <https://living.sas.cornell.edu/live/wheretolive/gradhousing/upload/Graduate-and-Professional-Housing-Guide-2016-17-web-version.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://living.sas.cornell.edu/participate/employment/GCA.cfm>



## Cornell University Student Assembly

38 **Whereas**, on January 28th, 2016, the Buildings and Properties Committee of the Cornell  
39 University Board of Trustees approved the selection of EdR for a new housing complex on the  
40 site of Maplewood Park<sup>1</sup>; and

41  
42 **Whereas**, Cornell entered into a Public Private Partnership (P3) with EdR “outlining a  
43 framework for Cornell to retain ownership of the land, but with EdR financing, constructing and  
44 managing the new housing project”<sup>3</sup>; and

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46 **Whereas**, this shift from on-campus to off-campus housing meant that EdR, as a private entity,  
47 could effectively no longer hire international students as GCAs in Maplewood; and

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49 **Whereas**, the inability to hire international students as GCAs in Maplewood effectively strips  
50 international students, who make up a significant portion of the demographic in GPSA on-  
51 campus housing, the opportunity for equitable representation in leadership positions that provide  
52 programming and mental health support to residents; and

53  
54 **Whereas**, international students are an especially vulnerable group with students having  
55 concerns ranging from a language barrier, stark cultural differences, new and challenging  
56 academic setting, unfamiliar environmental conditions, and isolation from family and support  
57 networks, leading to significant mental and emotional stresses; and

58  
59 **Whereas**, these arduous experiences are further exacerbated by cultural norms that  
60 disincentivize reaching out for help and rampant imposter syndrome that impedes their ability to  
61 reach out to students who do not have a shared experience for assistance; and

62  
63 **Whereas**, while we recognize that, under the new P3 model, it is illegal for EdR to hire  
64 international students as GCAs, graduate and professional students reached out to Cornell  
65 administrators in the hopes of finding a way to ensure the continued existence of international  
66 community leaders at Maplewood, even if it would be in a different form; and

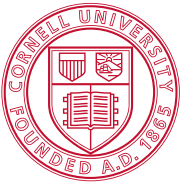
67  
68 **Whereas**, GPS leaders suggested that Cornell University hire Residence Community Leaders as  
69 Fellows paid and appointed through Cornell’s Off-Campus Housing Office (a branch of Student  
70 and Campus Life administered by Dean Vijay Pendakur), where their appointments would be  
71 made by Cornell University, thus allowing international students to apply and potentially serve  
72 as paid Community Leaders; and

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74 **Whereas**, despite repeated attempts to find a solution, it was made clear that the University will  
75 not be investing resources to create alternative opportunities for international students to serve  
76 as paid community leaders in Maplewood and receive compensation for their services; and

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<sup>3</sup> <http://news.cornell.edu/stories/2016/02/board-gives-green-light-new-grad-student-housing>



## Cornell University Student Assembly

78 **Whereas**, we express our disappointment that the University would not invest resources to  
79 ensure the continued existence of fairly compensated international student leaders that serve a  
80 vital role in building community and providing mental and emotional support for international  
81 students; and

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83 **Whereas**, EDR may encourage international students to volunteer their time and effort to assist  
84 their endeavors, as yet another form of unpaid labor imposed on graduate and professional  
85 students and a burden on a minority group; and

86  
87 **Whereas**, it was callously suggested that domestic students can be trained to understand and  
88 support the unique challenges of international students, and that international students can be  
89 “on-boarded” through presentations and workshops; and

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91 **Whereas**, we express our shock at the proposed idea that a homogenous group of students can be  
92 “trained” to empathize and support populations of different identities, or that students of different  
93 identities can be “on-boarded” to adapt to a new environment through presentations and  
94 meetings – ideas that undermine the value of diversity in leadership roles and trivialize the  
95 experience of being a minority; and

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97 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the SA expresses its support for GPSA Resolution 13: Calling For  
98 the Accommodation of International Students as Leaders at Maplewood Apartments; and

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100 **Be it further resolved**, that the SA reiterates the request of the GPSA for Cornell to find a  
101 solution that allows international students to serve as paid community leaders at the new  
102 Maplewood Apartments; and

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104 **Be it finally resolved**, if Cornell is unable to find a solution that allows international students to  
105 serve as community leaders in off-campus housing complexes under the P3 model with Cornell  
106 University, we ask that the University

- 107       1) Retain the remaining on-campus housing options for students on-campus and away from the  
108            P3 model so that international students can continue to serve as paid community leaders and  
109            resources to peers  
110       2) Introspect its commitment to creating an inclusive welcoming space for international students  
111            where leadership positions for this community are diminished

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115 Christopher Schott ‘18  
116 *International Students Liaison At-Large, Student Assembly*

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119 *(Reviewed by: Graduate and Professional Student Assembly, 04/09/2018)*