



Cornell University University Assembly

U.A. Resolution #19

Calling on Cornell to Establish Itself as a Sanctuary Campus

[3/30/21]

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5 **ABSTRACT:** This resolution is calling on Cornell to establish itself as a sanctuary campus for
6 undocumented students, faculty, and staff.

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8 **Whereas,** the term “sanctuary campus,” inspired by the sanctuary city movement, refers to any
9 college or university that implements policies to protect students, faculty, and staff who are
10 undocumented immigrants, and;

11
12 **Whereas,** the following are some of the policies that have been proposed or implemented by
13 self-described sanctuary campuses or other immigrant-friendly campuses:

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- Barring ICE officers from campus unless they possess a valid judicial warrant.
 - Instructing campus police not to cooperate with ICE or CBP against members of the campus community when an official judicial warrant is unavailable;
 - Refusing to share information about faculty or students' immigration status with ICE absent a court order, given FERPA rights; and
 - Implementing a policy of confidentiality on student or faculty immigration status
 - Facilitating “undocu-ally” workshops to educate students, faculty, and staff
 - Providing confidential legal support to students with immigration law questions and issues, and;
- 24



Cornell University University Assembly

25 **Whereas,** The American Association of University Professors has endorsed the sanctuary
26 campus movement, and;

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28 **Whereas,** the actions of sanctuary campuses do not conflict with their legal obligations. For
29 example, it is not a federal offense to refuse admission to ICE officers without a warrant, and;

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31 **Whereas,** other universities and colleges have established themselves as sanctuary campuses,
32 including but not limited to: University of Pennsylvania, Portland State University, Reed
33 College, Wesleyan University, Pitzer College, Santa Fe Community College, Swarthmore
34 College, Drake University, Connecticut College, and;

35

36 **Whereas,** There have been multiple protests at various campuses:

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- Connecticut College

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- Dartmouth College

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- Drexel University

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- Florida State University

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- Hobart and William Smith Colleges

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- Middlebury College

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- Mills College

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- New Mexico State University

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- The New School

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- Northeastern University

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- Ohio University

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- Portland Community College

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- Rutgers University

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- St. Mary's College

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- Stanford University

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- Stockton University



Cornell University University Assembly

- 53 • Texas State University
- 54 • Texas Woman's University
- 55 • Trinity College
- 56 • Tufts University
- 57 • University of Denver
- 58 • University of Illinois campuses
- 59 • University of Michigan
- 60 • University of Mississippi
- 61 • University of New Mexico
- 62 • University of North Texas
- 63 • University of Pennsylvania
- 64 • University of San Diego
- 65 • Vanderbilt University
- 66 • Wesleyan University
- 67 • Western New Mexico University
- 68 • Yale University, and;

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70 **Whereas**, this issue was brought up in 2016 with a faculty coalition group of approximately 100
71 faculty members petitioning for Cornell to establish itself as a sanctuary campus. The petition
72 gathered over 2,000 signatures but was not ratified by then sitting university president Hunter
73 Rawlings, and;

74

75 **Whereas**, there have been "ICE Scares" in the past following reported sightings of ICE officers
76 causing unnecessary stress and fear in the community, and;

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78 **Whereas**, CUPD has disclosed that they have no formal protocol in the event that a student or
79 member of the Cornell community is detained or deported by ICE, and;

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Cornell University University Assembly

81 **Whereas**, CUPD relies on an *informal* and *undisclosed* system of communication regarding
82 crisis situations involving ICE or CBP, and;

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84 **Whereas**, former Cornell University Administration has referred to members of the
85 undocumented community on campus as “charity cases,” and a former Dean of Students had
86 asked undocumented student organizers, “What more do you want?” fostering a toxic school
87 environment, and;

88

89 **Whereas**, students have threatened to call ICE on their undocumented peers, and;

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91 **Whereas**, undocumented students at Cornell have been recorded disclosing their status by fellow
92 students with the intent of exposing the undocumented students to the media and the public,
93 which increases the risk of being exposed, detained, and/or deported by ICE, and;

94

95 **Whereas**, only in 2016, did Cornell finally allow DACA students to be considered for financial
96 aid as domestic students, as opposed to international students; and only recently, in 2020, did
97 Cornell finally allow undocumented students to benefit from the domestic financial aid funding
98 pool instead of the international pool, and;

99

100 **Whereas**, due to the expansion of the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport into the Ithaca
101 Tompkins International Airport, Customs and Border Patrol, which has the ability to detain and
102 deport immigrants, is now stationed less than 3 mile from campus, and;

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104 **Whereas**, the presence of CBP less than three miles from campus increases the risk of
105 deportation, detainment, and interactions for all undocumented/DACA and international
106 students, faculty, and staff on campus, and;

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Cornell University University Assembly

108 **Whereas**, Cornell University is 251 Miles from the Canadian Border, which puts undocumented
109 and international people at a higher risk of interaction with ICE than other Ivy League
110 Universities, and;

111
112 **Whereas**, ICE documents show that, for years, law enforcement in hundreds of jurisdictions
113 nationwide, including major sanctuary cities like Seattle, Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles, are
114 still feeding information into regional databases that can be viewed by ICE, and;

115
116 **Whereas**, although Ithaca has declared itself as a Sanctuary City, the ongoing threat of
117 deportation and detainment persists in Ithaca, NY, as demonstrated when 1) an on-duty TC
118 Sheriff's Deputy illegally called ICE to report a Mexican man seeking medical attention in 2019,
119 2) multiple ICE arrests in 1 month produced huge fear in the immigrant community in 2018, and;

120
121 **Whereas**, New York ranks fourth in the nation with 12,271 deportations as of 2020, and;

122
123 **Whereas**, the increased presence of CBP and sustained risk of ICE interactions has contributed
124 to increased levels of fear, anxiety, and worsening mental health amongst undocumented and
125 international populations at Cornell University, and;

126
127 **Whereas**, President Martha Pollack has expressed support for DACA and undocumented
128 students:

129 “Cornell, since its founding, has been committed to diversity and inclusion, and DACA students
130 are an integral part of our community. They were brought to this country before they had a
131 choice in the matter, have grown up here, and are succeeding here despite significant challenges
132 and obstacles. I believe they deserve a chance to fulfill their dreams (2017),” and;

133
134 **Whereas**, the Cornell University Chapter of the American Association of University
135 Professors has expressed support for efforts to establish a sanctuary campus, and;



Cornell University University Assembly

136

137 **Whereas**, the following on campus organizations cosponsored this resolution at the Student
138 Assembly:

- 139 1. **Cornell DREAM Team**
- 140 2. **Cornell Anti-Detention Alliance**
- 141 3. **Cornell Abolitionist and Revolutionary Society**
- 142 4. **La Asociación Latina**
- 143 5. **International Student Union**
- 144 6. **Native American and Indigenous Students at Cornell**
- 145 7. **Cornell American Civil Liberties Union**
- 146 8. **Arab Student Association at Cornell**
- 147 9. **Contigo Peru**
- 148 10. **Cornell Roosevelt Institute**
- 149 11. **First Generation Student Union**
- 150 12. **CUSLAR: Committee on U.S.-Latin American Relations**
- 151 13. **South Asian Council**
- 152 14. **Do Better Cornell**, and;

153

154 **Whereas**, a similar resolution was passed by the Student Assembly on Thursday, March 25th,
155 2021, and;

156

157 **Whereas**, available data and supporting evidence show that college campuses must do more to
158 support undocumented and international students' health, safety, and wellbeing on campus.

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160 **Be it therefore resolved**, in order to live up to its motto of "Any Person, Any Study," Cornell
161 must ensure that undocumented students, faculty, and staff feel safe from detainment and
162 deportation, and;

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Cornell University University Assembly

164 **Be it finally resolved,** Cornell University must commit to fostering a safe and nourishing
165 environment for undocumented students by establishing a Sanctuary Campus, including but not
166 limited to:

- 167 • Barring ICE officers from campus unless they possess a valid judicial warrant.
- 168 • Instructing campus police not to cooperate with ICE or CBP against members of the
169 campus community when an official judicial warrant is unavailable;
- 170 • Refusing to share information about faculty or students' immigration status with ICE
171 absent a court order, given FERPA rights; and
- 172 • Implementing a policy of confidentiality on student or faculty immigration status
- 173 • Facilitating “undocu-ally” workshops to educate students, faculty, and staff
- 174 • Providing confidential legal support to students with immigration law, questions, and
175 issues
- 176 • Establishing an Undocumented Resource Center at Cornell University, overseen by the
177 Associate Director for Student Empowerment and Undocumented/DACA Student
178 Support.