

Cornell University
University Assembly

U.A. Resolution #4

Acknowledging the Passing of Transgender Day of Remembrance, Upholding the University Assembly's Commitment to Representing Trans and Genderqueer Members of the Campus Community, and Establishing the LGBTQIA+ Facilitator to the University Assembly

[11/24/2020]

1 **Sponsored By: Bennett Sherr, Undergraduate Representative**
2

3 **Abstract:** This resolution expresses the Cornell University Assembly's recognition of the 21st
4 Transgender Day of Remembrance which took place on Friday, November 20th, 2020. The bill
5 also seeks to ensure that the names of all the transgender and gender queer people who died from
6 violence in the United States this year and all future years are documented in our record. The
7 resolution affirms the University Assembly's support for protecting the rights and safety of
8 LGBTQIA+ Cornellians. Finally, the resolution establishes the LGBTQIA+ Facilitator to the
9 University Assembly, who will be elected from the voting membership to serve as the primary
10 point of contact between LGBTQIA+ community groups and the University Assembly.
11

12 **Whereas,** the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) describes Transgender
13 Day of Remembrance as, "An annual observance on November 20th that honors the memory of
14 the transgender people whose lives were lost in acts of anti-transgender violence,"
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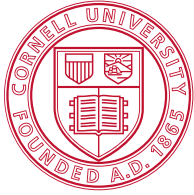
16 **Whereas,** Transgender Day of Remembrance dates back to a 1999 vigil led by transgender
17 advocate Gwendolyn Ann Smith to honor the memory of Rita Hester, a transgender woman
18 killed the year prior,
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20 **Whereas,** during 2020, the Transgender Murder Monitoring (TMM) project found 350 reported
21 murders of trans and gender-diverse people,
22

23 **Whereas,** a majority of the murders found by the TMM were reported in Brazil, Mexico, and the
24 United States, representing 237 of the 350 murders, and a 6% increase in reported murders from
25 2019,
26

27 **Whereas,** between 2008 and the present, the TMM has found 3,664 reported cases of murder
28 caused by anti-transgender violence spanning 75 different countries and territories across the
29 globe,
30

31 **Whereas,** the average age of the transgender people who were murdered in 2020 was just 31
32 years old, the youngest victim was 15,
33



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34 **Whereas**, the Human Rights Campaign recognizes the murders of 37 transgender individuals in
35 the United States during 2020, the most of any year since the organization began keeping track in
36 2013,

37

38 **Whereas**, of the over 200 known murders across the country documented by the Human Rights
39 Campaign, two-thirds of the victims were transgender women of color and 60% of the total
40 murders involved the presence of a firearm,

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42 **Whereas**, victims of anti-transgender violence are disproportionately transgender women of
43 color,

44

45 **Whereas**, The FBI has noted an uptick in gender-based hate crimes in 2019,

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47 **Whereas**, nearly three out of every four cases of anti-LGBTQ+ hate crimes are committed
48 against transgender women,

49

50 **Whereas**, the National Center for Transgender Equality states that one in four transgender
51 people have faced a bias-driven assault,

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53 **Whereas**, transgender people experience heightened rates of family and intimate partner
54 violence, and sexual assault,

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56 **Whereas**, transgender people are more likely to be revictimized when reporting physical or
57 sexual assault,

58

59 **Whereas**, the Anti-Violence Project reports that transgender people are 3.7 times more likely to
60 be victims of police violence, with higher rates amongst black and brown transgender women,

61

62 **Whereas**, more than one-fifth of transgender people who had interacted with the police reported
63 police harassment, amongst black transgender people this number jumps to almost two-fifths,

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65 **Whereas**, violence against trans people frequently goes unreported or underreported and the
66 previously mentioned statistics most likely do not fully encapsulate the gravity of the problem,

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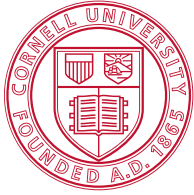
68 **Whereas**, anti-trans violence occurs in New York State and acts of anti-trans discrimination and
69 harassment occur on Cornell's campus,

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71 **Whereas**, the Cornell University Assembly first formally recognized Transgender Day of
72 Remembrance on November 24th, 2020,

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74 **Whereas**, LGBTQIA+ Cornellians have specific needs that differ from the general Cornell
75 community,



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76

77 **Whereas**, LGBTQIA+ voices are traditionally underrepresented in all forms of governance,

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79 **Be it therefore resolved**, the Cornell University Assembly acknowledges the passing of
80 Transgender Day of Remembrance on November 20th, 2020,

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82 **Be it further resolved**, the University Assembly pledges to recognize and commemorate all
83 future Transgender Days of Remembrance through a reading of the names of the transgender
84 people who were murdered within the United States that year,

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86 **Be it further resolved**, the Chair of the Assembly is encouraged to read the names at the
87 beginning of the public meeting closest to November 20th and all the names read should be
88 recognized in the meeting minutes,

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90 **Be it further resolved**, the Cornell University Assembly will affirm its commitment to fighting
91 for the rights and safety of transgender and genderqueer Cornellians,

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93 **Be it further resolved**, the Cornell University Assembly will commit to actively working with
94 LGBTQIA+ student and employee groups through creating the position, "LGBTQIA+ Facilitator
95 to the University Assembly",

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97 **Be it further resolved**, the LGBTQIA+ Facilitator to the University Assembly shall be a non-
98 officer role and is separate from liaisons listed within Section 6.1 of the Assembly bylaws,

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100 **Be it further resolved**, the LGBTQIA+ Facilitator to the University Assembly will be elected
101 from the general membership of the Assembly during the first organizational meeting,

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103 **Be it further resolved**, in the event that no one runs for the position or the LGBTQIA+
104 Facilitator to the University Assembly is otherwise vacant at any point after the first
105 organizational meeting, the Chair of the Assembly shall appoint someone from the general
106 membership of the Assembly to fill the role,

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108 **Be it further resolved**, the LGBTQIA+ Facilitator to the University Assembly will be charged
109 with maintaining constant communication and cooperation with LGBTQIA+ undergraduate
110 student, graduate and professional student, staff, and faculty groups,

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112 **Be it finally resolved**, the LGBTQIA+ Facilitator to the University Assembly will present
113 updates to the Assembly at least once a month during a regularly scheduled meeting.