

1 **U.A. Resolution #6**

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3 **Requesting Specific Information on Labor Practices at Weill**  
4 **Cornell Medicine – Qatar**

5 February 9, 2016

6 **Sponsored by:**

7 **Alexander Thomson, Graduate/Professional Student; Executive Vice Chair,**  
8 **University Assembly**  
9 **Matt Indimine, Undergraduate; Undergraduate Representative, University**  
10 **Assembly**

11  
12 **On behalf of:**

13 **UA Campus Welfare Committee (Passed 6-0-0 on 2/2/2016)**  
14 **Cornell Organization for Labor Action: Carunya Achar, Michael Ferrer,**  
15 **Allison Considine, Xavier Eddy, Deepa Saharia**

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17 **Whereas,** Article III of the University Assembly Charter grants the University  
18 Assembly the authority to “examine, on its own initiative, matters which involve the  
19 interests or concern the welfare of a substantial segment of the campus community;”  
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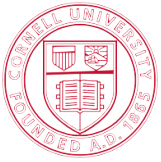
21 **Whereas,** Recent protests have revealed among students, staff, and faculty a  
22 substantial interest in the labor practices and conditions at Weill Cornell Medicine -  
23 Qatar (WCM-Q);  
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25 **Whereas,** WCM-Q shares not only the Cornell name, but also its common values,  
26 educational mission, excellence in research, and commitment to bettering the global  
27 community; furthermore, WCM-Q draws faculty from both the Ithaca and New York  
28 City campuses;  
29

30 **Whereas,** According to the Operating and Capital Budget Plan FY2016, WCM-Q  
31 contributes over \$88 million annually to Cornell’s operating budget, which directly  
32 affects the financial position of the university as a whole;  
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34 **Whereas,** Cornell's practices both at home and abroad reflect upon the institution as a  
35 whole, impacting the prestige and the reputation of the broader Cornell community,  
36 including its administrators, faculty, staff, and students;  
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38 **Whereas,** Qatari labor practices enforce the *kafala* system, a migrant-labor monitoring  
39 process which requires all unskilled laborers to have an in-country sponsor, usually  
40 their employer, who is responsible for their visa and legal status. This system creates  
41 opportunities for employers to commit massive labor exploitation with minimal legal  
42 repercussions. Migrant workers compose 94% of the Qatari labor force and ubiquitously



43 suffer under a system in which employer consent is required to change jobs, leave the  
44 country, get a driver's license, rent a home, or open a checking account;

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46 **Whereas**, an initial investigation into working conditions in Education City by the  
47 International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) - a global confederation of workers'  
48 organizations - found instances of forced labor, cramped living conditions, low wages,  
49 and passport confiscation. The results of this investigation were sent to the presidents of  
50 universities present in Education City in March of 2014, including Cornell, with only  
51 Georgetown responding to the letter;

52  
53 **Whereas**, Cornell University, as an institution, has a moral obligation to ensure that its  
54 community members are treated with dignity and afforded the same basic human  
55 rights, no matter where they are in the world or in what capacity they serve the  
56 university;

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58 **Whereas**, WCM-Q recognizes its positive role in society, stating in its mission a  
59 commitment "to provide the highest quality of care to the community;"

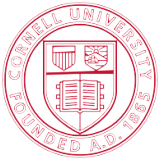
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61 **Whereas**, The 2022 World Cup will place Qatar in the global spotlight, likely exposing  
62 Education City, WCM-Q, and Cornell University to increased scrutiny by the media and  
63 viewers around the world;

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65 **Whereas**, President Garrett responded to these concerns in two letters to Cornell  
66 Organization for Labor Action (COLA) in September and October 2015, a response to  
67 Student Assembly Resolution 16 in November 2015, and a letter to the Coalition Against  
68 Gulf Exploitation (CAGE) in January 2016. However, these responses about labor  
69 practices and conditions at WCM-Q have lacked sufficient detail for the University  
70 Assembly to objectively evaluate the issue;

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72 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the University Assembly, in order to promote  
73 transparency, requests information about workforce policies and practices at WCM-Q,  
74 specifically:

- 75 • The composition of the workforce at WCM-Q, including the number of Cornell  
76 employees and contracted employees and the roles these worker groups fulfill  
77 (e.g. job group and job family analysis),
- 78 • The names and affiliations of third party employers contracted by WCM-Q,
- 79 • The policies and standards used by WCM-Q to choose third party employers,
- 80 • The specific worker protections stipulated in contracts between WCM-Q and  
81 third party employers, and Cornell's options for redress if those stipulations are  
82 violated,
- 83 • Any and all policies and practices WCM-Q uses to ensure Cornell's standards are  
84 being upheld, including the resources available to workers with grievances;

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Cornell University  
University Assembly

86 **Be it further resolved**, that the information in lines 72-84 be made publicly available  
87 and presented to the University Assembly by the May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 meeting;

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89 **Be it further resolved**, that the University Assembly requests the details of any and  
90 all previous labor investigations or audits conducted at WCM-Q by Cornell, including  
91 the investigators, the date(s) of investigation(s), and the conclusions made by the  
92 investigation(s);

93  
94 **Be it further resolved**, that the University Assembly requests the details, where  
95 known, of any and all previous labor investigations or audits conducted at WCM-Q by  
96 external organizations, including the investigators, the date(s) of investigation(s), and  
97 the conclusions made by the investigation(s);

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99 **Be it further resolved**, that the University Assembly requests, where not in conflict  
100 with the law, the details of any and all contact regarding salaries, policies, and  
101 protections with contracted staff at WCM-Q;

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103 **Be it further resolved**, that the University Assembly requests the protocols and  
104 results of any and all monitoring of the working conditions of contracted staff conducted  
105 by the WCM-Q administration;

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107 **Be it further resolved**, that the University Assembly requests the details of any and  
108 all contact with vendors regarding benefits and protections mandated for contracted  
109 staff;

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111 **Be it further resolved**, that the information requested in lines 89-109 be made  
112 publicly available and presented to the University Assembly during a regularly  
113 scheduled meeting no later than February 2017;

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115 **Be it further resolved**, that the University Assembly will maintain impartiality on the  
116 issue of labor conditions at Cornell's international facilities until further information  
117 becomes available;

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119 **Be it finally resolved**, that this resolution will be transmitted to President Elizabeth  
120 Garrett (upon her return), Acting President Michael Kotlikoff, Weill Cornell Medicine  
121 Dean and Provost for Medical Affairs Laurie Glimcher, WCM-Q Dean Javaid Sheikh,  
122 WCM-Q director of human resources Omar Baki, and any individuals or organizations  
123 involved in gathering the requested information.