

1 Resolution X: Requesting that the University Provide 2 Funds for an MD Gynecologist at Cornell Health

3 **Abstract:** The student health service at Cornell’s Ithaca campus, Cornell Health, does not currently
4 have an MD gynecologist on staff, which impedes many students from receiving necessary
5 gynecological care. This resolution requests that the university provide funding for Cornell Health to
6 employ an MD gynecologist who is able to diagnose and treat the most common gynecological
7 issues in the student population, including chronic vulvovaginal conditions and pelvic pain
8 conditions.

9 **Sponsored by:** Michelle Heeney, Life Sciences Voting Representative

10 **Whereas,** the mission of Cornell Health is “to foster lifelong learning and well-being through
11 innovative services and strategies that promote the physical, emotional, and social health of
12 individuals and our diverse campus community” and

13
14 **Whereas,** pelvic pain conditions, including endometriosis, vulvodynia, and polycystic ovary
15 syndrome (PCOS), affect up to 16% of cisgender women of reproductive age^{1 2 3 4}, as well as many
16 transgender and nonbinary people of reproductive age, and

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18 **Whereas,** untreated pelvic pain can cause short and long-term health consequences, including
19 psychological and physical distress, anxiety, depression, poorer quality of life, anemia and infertility,
20 as well as causing absenteeism and productivity declines⁵, and

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22 **Whereas,** we commend Cornell Health for providing quality gynecological treatment to many
23 students despite limited resources, while affirming that an MD gynecologist could provide services
24 that are currently unavailable, and

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26 **Whereas,** other peer institutions including Harvard and Yale have MD gynecologists available
27 through their student health services, and

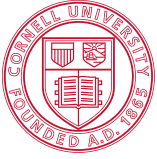
¹ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/endometriosis>

² https://www.monash.edu/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1412644/PCOS_Evidence-Based-Guidelines_20181009.pdf

³ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14681994.2013.842969>

⁴ <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/roughly-one-quarter-us-women-affected-pelvic-floor-disorders>

⁵ [https://www.fertstert.org/article/S0015-0282\(19\)32292-7/fulltext](https://www.fertstert.org/article/S0015-0282(19)32292-7/fulltext)



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29 **Whereas**, Cornell students do not have access to convenient and accessible off-campus
30 gynecological care because the majority of MD gynecologists in the Ithaca area specialize in
31 childbirth services, which does not cover the full scope of gynecological care that Cornell students
32 need; this forces many students to travel to Rochester or New Haven to receive quality care for
33 common conditions, and

34

35 **Whereas**, on December 2, 2021, 136 students published an editorial in the Cornell Daily Sun to
36 “urge Cornell to provide funding for Cornell Health to hire an MD gynecologist. Specifically, we
37 need a gynecologist with experience diagnosing and treating chronic vulvovaginal and pelvic pain
38 conditions such as vulvodynia, endometriosis, PCOS, and pelvic floor dysfunction”⁶, and

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40 **Whereas**, on June 24th, 2022 following the U.S. Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v. Wade,
41 Dean Augustine M.K. Choi sent an email to the entire Cornell community stating that “Cornell
42 clinicians, across all our campuses, will continue to provide quality health care services to women, as
43 is legal in the state of New York, and will continue to serve the health care needs of all our patients,
44 faculty, staff and students,” despite the fact that students needing gynecological care do not have
45 access to an MD gynecologist on Ithaca’s campus, and

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47 **Whereas**, considering that historically marginalized groups, including racial and ethnic minority
48 groups and LGBTQ+ persons, often have disproportionately low access to comprehensive
49 gynecological care, Cornell Health could reduce access disparities in the student population by
50 providing inclusive care from an MD gynecologist^{7 8 9 10}, and

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52 **Whereas**, we believe that providing quality gynecological care to students on the Ithaca campus is
53 an urgent issue, and such care could greatly improve the wellbeing of many students.

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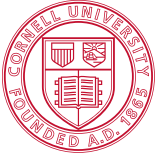
⁶ <https://cornellsun.com/2021/12/02/letter-to-the-editor-cornell-health-needs-a-gynecologist/>

⁷ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26595584/>

⁸ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12712135>

⁹ <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2012/05/health-care-for-lesbians-and-bisexual-women>

¹⁰ <https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/full/10.1089/trgh.2018.0022>



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55 **Be it therefore resolved,** that the University secure funding and develop a projected timeline for
56 hiring an MD gynecologist who can treat the most common gynecological issues faced by the
57 Cornell student population, and

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59 **Be it further resolved,** that the University provide regular updates on the hiring process to the
60 GPSA and SA, and

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62 **Be it finally resolved,** that the University adequately communicate all gynecological services,
63 including those provided by the MD gynecologist, that are available at Cornell Health to the student
64 body.

65

66 Respectfully Submitted,

67 Michelle Heeney

68 Life Sciences Voting Representative, GPSA

69 Arielle Johnson

70 Treasurer, Pelvic Pain Association at Cornell

71

72 Pelvic Pain Association at Cornell

73 Planned Parenthood Generation Action at Cornell

74 PERIOD@Cornell

75 The Advocacy Project from Cornell University

76 Law - Women of Color Collective

77 Cornell Law School - Women's Law Coalition

78 Disability+

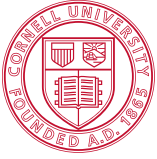
79 Multicultural Academic Council

80 Cornell University Women's Health Initiative

81 Qgrads (LGBTQ+ Graduate Student Association)

82 Gender Justice Advocacy Coalition, Cornell University

83 Biodiversify Affiliates at Cornell



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84 I-An "Amy" Su, President, Cornell's Graduate & Professional Women's Network (GPWomen)