



Resolution to Drop the Suspensions and Ensure Student Safety

Sponsored by Senators Natalia León Díaz, Emaan Sayied, Saara Engineer, and Sonal Churiwal | September 3, 2024

WHEREAS, on April 27, 2024, over 250 students, alumni, and community members organized a non-violent protest and encampment demanding WashU to cut ties with Boeing, in solidarity with Palestinians facing occupation and genocide, *and*

WHEREAS, over 100 protesters were [arrested](#), including 23 students and four faculty members, *and*

WHEREAS, The New York Times [reported](#) on more than 200 arrests on encampments in solidarity with Palestine established on four universities across the nation, including WashU, *and*

WHEREAS, multiple witnesses report that the protest was characterized by a peaceful atmosphere, with children playing alongside their families, as well as a silent space for Muslim students and community members to [pray](#), *and*

WHEREAS, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Anna Gonzalez, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Administrative Officer, Nichol L. Luoma, and Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Beverly Wendland sent a university-wide email on April 27 stating that they “felt strongly that this demonstration had the potential to get out of control and become dangerous,” *and*

WHEREAS, after police and University administrators refused to speak to students, alumni, and faculty, presidential candidate Jill Stein and alderpeople Megan Green and Alicia Sonnier attempted to [de-escalate](#) and were forced back by police, *and*

WHEREAS, some of the arrests targeted protesters who were [recording](#) police, holding up banners a [distance](#) away from the encampment, or otherwise located outside of the circle made around the encampment, *and*

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WHEREAS, there is ample footage of police violently harassing peaceful protestors by physically [aggravating](#), pushing, [pinning](#) down, and using [bicycles](#) as weapons, *and*

WHEREAS, there was an overbearing police presence with over 50 officers from multiple [police departments](#), with armed officers in riot gear seen preparing tear gas canisters and the presence of assault rifles and drones, *and*

WHEREAS, The [Riverfront Times](#) reported violent arrest tactics such as slamming protestors into the ground, hooking arms around throats, and forcing people into the ground, including the elderly, *and*

WHEREAS, a [statement](#) published by the coalition Faculty for Justice in Palestine following the violent arrests stated, “university administration orchestrated the brutal arrest, attack, and use of extreme force against its own community members and against local St. Louisans,” *and*

WHEREAS, United States House of Representatives Cori Bush [affirmed solidarity](#) with protestors urging “university & local authorities to allow these courageous students & community members to continue their practice of nonviolent civil disobedience” *and*

WHEREAS, in response to a prior disruption of an admitted students event on April 13, Dr. Anna Gonzalez and Dr. Beverly Wendland affirmed in a University-wide email that their “highest priority is the safety and well-being of our community,” *and*

WHEREAS, arrested students have been suspended, prohibited from entering campus, and evicted from their dormitories, causing them to lose access to jobs and critical services, including housing, healthcare, and food, *and*

WHEREAS, Chancellor Andrew Martin affirmed his commitment to cultivating “a campus community in which everyone has a voice, the freedom to exercise their rights and duties to speak out against injustice and inequity, and an opportunity to learn from one another without insult or intimidation” in a [blog post](#), *and*

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WHEREAS, in the email sent on April 27, administrators reaffirmed the University's commitment to free expression, yet continue to strictly enforce University policy arbitrarily, effectively limiting what is deemed as appropriate expression, creating a culture of fear and intimidation that discourages students from peacefully protesting, *and*

WHEREAS, Student Union Senate called for the University to divest from Boeing in a prior [resolution](#) passed on March 19th, which has not been acknowledged or addressed by University administration whatsoever, *and*

WHEREAS, student groups have engaged in multiple walk-outs, art-builds, and teach-ins to voice their demands for over 200 days before peacefully establishing the encampment, *and*

WHEREAS, addressing the University's suspension in response to the April 13th protest, over 100 faculty, students, and alumni signed an open [letter](#) establishing that "the use of armed guards against our students is an unwarranted and deeply disturbing escalation," and demanded "that the university uphold its own professed positions on free speech and academic freedom," *and*

WHEREAS, the Association of Latin American Students released a [statement](#) signed by other affinity-based student groups, including the Association of Black Students and Asian Multicultural Council, calling on the university to revoke suspensions for students involved in the protests on April 13, *and*

WHEREAS, despite widespread dissent from the student body, the Student Union Executive Council has failed to clearly condemn the militarized police response to the encampment, instead signing onto statements and programming related to free speech that undermines the discrimination that protestors and students of color continue to face, *and*



WHEREAS, the Speaker of the Senate and several Senate and Treasury members provided feedback to be considered for the revision of the Student Conduct Code on May 1st, yet little of this [feedback](#) was incorporated, *and*

WHEREAS, WashU has failed to address ongoing safety threats to pro-Palestinian students despite repeated expressions of concern, including an [incident](#) where students were ridiculed, laughed at, and taken pictures of for holding banners with the names of children killed in Gaza, *therefore be it*

RESOLVED, The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards ought to drop all suspensions given to all students and faculty who protest in solidarity with Palestine from their records, as well as allow students to finish their education and obtain their degrees, *and*

RESOLVED, The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards out to define what constitutes both “unreasonable” and “disruptive behavior” or “that aids, conspires with, attempts or agrees to commit or protect a Student or Student Group who commits a Code Offense,” *and*

RESOLVED, WashU ought to reinstate students and faculty facing employment changes due to their suspensions and receive monetary compensation for lost wages, *and*

RESOLVED, WashU ought to implement the feedback offered by the Senate and Treasury in further qualifying what constitutes disruptive behavior in the university Code of Conduct, *and*

RESOLVED, WashU ought to remain committed to its statements on free speech and freedom of expression by actively protecting peaceful student protesters who are faced with harassment and ridicule, *and*

RESOLVED, WashU ought to cease the punitive and violent policing of students and faculty protesting on campus in solidarity with Palestine, *and*

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RESOLVED, WashU ought to immediately disarm the Washington University Police Department, *and*

RESOLVED, the Student Union Executive Council ought to explicitly condemn the militarized police response and suspensions ensuing from the encampment and subsequently work towards divestment from Boeing and revising of the Student Code of Conduct, *and*

RESOLVED, WashU ought to address and comply with Student Union Senate's prior demands to divest fully from Boeing, sever all connections with the corporation, and release a transparency report about investment practices, *and*

RESOLVED, Chancellor Andrew Martin ought to resign due to the university's militarized police response resulting in arrests, suspensions, loss of employment, homelessness, and physical and psychological harms after months of failing to address vocalized demands of divestment, *and*

RESOLVED, WashU ought to create an Indigenous Studies department and ensure academic freedom for professors teaching and researching about Palestine, *and*

RESOLVED, this Senate urges students to contact relevant University administrators demanding the lift of suspensions and evictions related to the protests in solidarity with Palestine.

Natalia León Díaz

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