



City of Cambridge

POR 2026-29
FIRST IN COUNCIL
February 9, 2026

COUNCILLOR NOLAN
MAYOR SIDDIQUI
COUNCILLOR AL-ZUBI
VICE MAYOR AZEEM

- WHEREAS: In April 2025, the City Council passed [POR 2025 #52](#), urging Harvard to stand up to the illegal and immoral demands of the Trump administration to safeguard academic independence, the rule of law, and democracy, and directing the City Manager to act with urgency and coordinate a united response to counter assaults on Harvard, and by extension, our city's historic role as a center of higher education; and
- WHEREAS: Cambridge is home to a diverse and robust community of students, educators, and institutions of higher education including Harvard University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Lesley University, and Hult International Business School, all of which are an essential part of our economy and produce research benefiting the country and world; and
- WHEREAS: The Trump Administration has repeatedly and aggressively undermined institutions of higher education by withholding federal funding to advance its own political agenda, which includes dismantling diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, suppressing student speech and protest, restricting scientific research on issues including ones benefitting public health, lifesaving medical discoveries, and climate change, and threatening the rights and safety of international students; and
- WHEREAS: These actions threaten not only the United States' status as a world leader in research and innovation but also constitutionally guaranteed rights to free speech and principles of academic freedom, diversity, peaceful protest, and privacy, which should never be compromised; and
- WHEREAS: Academic freedom and independence are essential to our nation, and political pressure should have no role in admissions, hiring, infrastructure, employment, or the content of the curriculum; and
- WHEREAS: Entities are standing up for higher education, as evidenced by the Board of Supervisors in San Francisco, San Mateo County in California, and the City of Los Angeles, unanimously passing resolutions for academic freedom and against coercion of universities; and
- WHEREAS: Our country's higher education sector is a global leader in discoveries that drive innovation, economic growth, and job creation, and funding for research should be based strictly on scientific and professional merit and withdrawn only after due process; and

- WHEREAS: Diverse backgrounds and experiences are vital to learning, research, and education; and
- WHEREAS: Higher education must uphold freedom of speech, peaceful protest, privacy, and all constitutional rights, ensuring college campuses remain forums for open debate and discussion, not a place where ideas are silenced; and
- WHEREAS: Academic freedom bestows both rights and obligations on institutions of higher education and they must both protect their rights and uphold their obligations in service to the community and democracy even while facing challenges from those who hold political power and financial influence; and
- WHEREAS: Higher education institutions' obligations include preserving academic freedom, civil liberties, and constitutional and human rights through their own policies and practices – for all faculty, associated scholars, students, staff and others with affiliations to higher education institutions; including adjusting when appropriate to ensure fair and welcoming campus environment for all students, staff and faculty; and
- WHEREAS: The response from academic institutions to attacks from the Trump Administration will have a profound impact on the City of Cambridge, the region, the state, and the nation; now therefore be it
- ORDERED: That the Cambridge City Council supports institutions of higher education to resist federal government overreach and condemns the Trump Administration's attacks on higher education, which are detrimental to our City's economy and the Commonwealth and country; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward suitably engrossed copies of this resolution to the Governor of Massachusetts, state senate and state house leaders, the Cambridge state and federal delegation, urging them to stand in solidarity with institutions of higher learning in defense of academic freedom, independence and constitutional rights; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward suitably engrossed copies of this resolution to the Chair of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, the presidents of Harvard, MIT, Lesley and Hult, advising them of our support.

In City Council February 9, 2026.

Adopted by a ye and nay vote:-

Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0.

Attest:- Paula M. Crane, Interim City Clerk

A true copy;

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paula M. Crane". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the "ATTEST:-" text.

ATTEST:-

Paula M. Crane
Interim City Clerk