

September 2, 2025

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to share my experiences and concerns regarding how CGSU-UE's presence has negatively affected my time as a graduate student at Cornell University. I am a fifth-year Ph.D. student, allowing me the opportunity to witness the environment at Cornell before the union was recognized here.

When I first arrived at Cornell, I felt a strong sense of belonging. I was afforded the opportunity to pursue my Ph.D., while being paid a wage that allowed me to live comfortably and attain financial stability. Moreover, we were given free platinum-level health insurance, allowing academics, research, and future career aspirations to be the only thing we needed to worry about. I viewed this as an incredible stepping-stone in my life.

As a Jewish student, I have experienced increasing discomfort as well as alienation, particularly due to the CGSU-UE's involvement and endorsement of various protests and activities that spread Jewish hatred. At times, these events have limited my ability to roam freely around campus. I have never hidden my Jewish identity and I continue to wear my Star of David necklace proudly, but this has caused me to need to avoid areas on campus when the union hosts its growing number of antisemitic events.

Earlier this year, I was required to submit a letter requesting a religious exemption from joining and financially supporting CGSU-UE. Upon ratification of the contract, we were told we would only need to check a box to say we were religiously objecting from joining the union, but this is not what happened. I never imagined having to justify why, as a Jew, I could not support a union who supports and endorses Boycott, Divest, and Sanction (BDS) movement, which advocates for the economic and cultural isolation of Israel, with their goal being to end Israel's existence. Moreover, I received a follow-up questionnaire that demanded I prove the extent of my Judaism through deeply personal questions—questions no one has the right to ask, let alone those who perpetuate Jewish hatred. It was a painful experience and beyond anything I ever imagined I would be asked to justify.

Additionally, after I signed a petition addressed to the Cornell administration opposing a union shop for CGSU-UE, I learned a union organizer met with a friend of mine, informed her that I signed the petition, and attempted to convince her that I was wrong for opposing a union shop clause and that union shop is consistent with American democracy. The union is bullying and employing intimidation tactics, trying to silence and discredit those who do not agree with them. That is not consistent with our freedoms as Americans, and it was honestly frightening to feel like the union was trying to turn my friends

against me.

Prior to CGSU's ratification, I had contemplated staying for a sixth year to increase my research and publication record, but the last two years have been so emotionally draining that I've decided to graduate after five. I'm aware that this may impact my future opportunities, and I'll need to work harder to catch up. But I cannot stay where I no longer feel welcome, nor can I continue expending my energy fighting a union who has made their objective clear. I hope that one day graduate students can return to focusing on why they came to Cornell University and similar institutions—to pursue research and work towards their future career aspirations, without the distractions and toxic environment imposed by CGSU-UE.

Sincerely,

Keri D'Angelo