

Resolution 025
A Resolution for Ethics in Campus Construction (RECC)
Sponsored by: Senator Kruger
Co-Sponsored by: Senator Kish

Whereas,

In October of 2021, the Student Government Association (SGA) Senate-07 unanimously passed Resolution 07-009, “A Resolution to Ensure the Proper Use of the University’s Financial Holdings.”¹

Whereas,

Resolution 07-009 encouraged the University to condemn intimidation by the People’s Republic of China (PRC) against Uyghur minorities and others protesting PRC repression of Uyghur minorities, as well as to investigate and cut financial and/or research ties with any entity complicit in the repression of Uyghur minorities in the PRC.²

Whereas,

The Catholic University of America was the first university in the United States to pursue such a divestment, providing an example to other universities nationwide.³

Whereas,

Xinjiang is home to the four largest polysilicon factories in the world, which is a vital component in solar panel production.⁴

Whereas,

The Uyghur Forced Labor Protection Act (UFLPA) was enacted by the United States Congress on December 23, 2021, to strengthen the existing prohibition against the importation of goods made wholly or in part with forced labor into the United States and to end the systematic use of forced labor in the PRC.⁵

Whereas,

Despite the UFLPA passage in December of 2021, recent solar panel projects in the United States have still been struggling with materials sourced with forced labor from Xinjiang.⁶

¹ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_FEjqD486ym0R-9cJcE9Adwe1ahtcCjH/view

² Ibid.

³ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/11/24/uyghur-genocide-university-divestment-movement-is-here/>

⁴ <https://www.csis.org/analysis/dark-spot-solar-energy-industry-forced-labor-xinjiang>

⁵ <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/PLAW-117publ78>

⁶ <https://www.themainewire.com/2023/01/maine-augusta-solar-salve-labor-xinjiang-china-janet-mills-green-energy/>

Whereas,

This is due to the fact that solar panels produced in China, and Xinjiang specifically, are cheaper than competitors, benefitting from massive state subsidies and “cheap labor” derived from forced labor, which the Chinese government contracts out to various solar panel companies in the region.⁷

Whereas,

The federal government is limited in their capacity to confiscate solar panels made with Xinjiangese forced labor, meaning it is largely up to the purchaser to do due diligence in ensuring their solar panels are not made from forced labor.⁸

Whereas,

The issue of solar panels and components being made with forced labor is of particular note due to the West Campus Solar Array construction, which is ongoing.⁹

Whereas,

In order to prevent direct or indirect involvement in human forced labor, the University has a duty to carefully handle its import of solar panels, so as to not become a participant.

Be it enacted that,

The Student Government Association Senate, acting in its official capacity as the representative of the undergraduate student body of The Catholic University of America, hereby requests that

1. The university will not conduct business with companies complicit or directly involved in forced labor, especially Uyghur forced labor in the People’s Republic of China.
 - a. The university will check with the UFLPA vendor list to ensure that any potential partner is not complicit in forced labor.
 - b. The university will do due diligence in ensuring a partner is not complicit in forced labor.
2. The university will not purchase solar panels made in part or in whole by Uyghur forced labor.

Agreed to by a vote of _____ yeas to _____ nays on this date: _____ with _____ abstaining and _____ not present.

Anthony Crnkovich
President of the Student Government Association

Maevis Fahey
Vice President of the Student Government Association

⁷ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelshellenberger/2021/05/19/china-made-solar-cheap-through-coal-subsidies--forced-labor-not-efficiency/?sh=24ba856571ec>

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ <https://communications.catholic.edu/news/2022/08/university-breaks-ground-on-west-campus-solar-array.html>