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## **HARVARD STUDENT GROUPS RELEASE STATEMENT CONDEMNING CHELSEA MANNING DECISION**

### ***Dissatisfied students speak out against Kennedy School's disinvitation of Chelsea Manning***

Cambridge, MA—Harvard students released a statement Saturday morning calling on the Harvard Kennedy School to reinstate Manning as a visiting fellow at the Institute of Politics.

“I’m disgusted that Harvard would bow to CIA pressure and take such extensive measures to delegitimize Manning; Harvard’s actions reveal a deep fear of the demands for transparency and accountability Chelsea Manning represents.” said Lily Velona, a Harvard undergraduate who said they were unsurprised and disappointed by the decision.

The statement, below, was signed by twelve major student organizations.

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We, the undersigned, write to express our deep dissatisfaction with Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government for rescinding Chelsea Manning’s invitation to serve as a visiting fellow at the Institute of Politics. We call on the Kennedy School to immediately reinstate Ms. Manning’s designation and issue her a personal apology.

The withdrawal of Chelsea Manning’s fellowship is a classic case of selective outrage. Harvard has not severed its affiliation with General David Petraeus, currently a [senior fellow](#) at the Harvard Kennedy School who was [convicted for leaking](#) classified information to his mistress while Director of the CIA. Another fellow at the Harvard Institute of Politics, [Corey Lewandowski](#), [assaulted](#) a reporter while managing President Donald Trump’s campaign. Chelsea Manning’s critics are not actually concerned with the law or the safety of soldiers ([the Pentagon itself has admitted](#) her leaks had no significant impact on U.S. military efforts) but rather take issue with her exposure of unchecked military violence.

Chelsea Manning has not yet been afforded the gloss of time, as have widely respected whistleblowers of the past—from Daniel Ellsberg, who exposed the secret escalation of the Vietnam War, to Mark Felt, who revealed crucial details of the Watergate scandal—but her contributions will undoubtedly be recognized in time. She exposed tens of thousands of [previously unrecorded deaths](#) in Iraq, civilian slaughter so frequent as to appear routine, and the United States’ [failure to investigate](#) hundreds of reports of torture. The war logs among the documents she leaked reveal the disturbingly cavalier attitude of military personnel towards the torture and murder of those whom they purported to liberate; one [now-infamous recording](#) reveals a helicopter crew laughing at the civilians—“dead bastards”—they had just killed. Americans have a right to know the atrocities their government commits in their name, and we are all indebted to Ms. Manning for bringing these atrocities to light.

Chelsea Manning's experiences as an incarcerated trans woman make her perspective all the more important and her exclusion all the more inexcusable. Amid pervasive and targeted torture at the hands of the United States government, Ms. Manning has relentlessly fought for justice for herself and others. Her refusal to stay silent while being kept in [men's military prisons](#) and [denied life-saving health care](#) led to a landmark case that [established the right](#) to trans-related healthcare for people in this nation's prisons. Chelsea Manning's groundbreaking struggle for dignity and respect sheds light on the experiences of hundreds of thousands of trans prisoners throughout the US, and her story deserves a platform at Harvard.

In light of her selfless sacrifices as a whistleblower, her dedication to the truth, and her commitment to human rights, we call upon the Harvard University Kennedy School to reinstate Chelsea Manning's designation as a fellow at the Institute of Politics.

Signed,

Harvard Anti-Islamophobia Network

Harvard Asian American Women's Association

Harvard College Pakistan Students Association

Harvard Global Health and AIDS Coalition

Harvard Graduate Students Union - United Auto Workers Organizing Committee

Harvard Islamic Society

Harvard Organization for Prison Education and Reform

Harvard Progressive Jewish Alliance

Harvard Queer Students and Allies

Harvard Student Labor Action Movement

Harvard Trans Task Force

Renegade Collective