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JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

March 2007

Greetings from the State of Maine

Thank you for your participation here, today, in this important meeting in Harrisburg.

This meeting marks the day when Maine and other states, and other governmental entities, will begin to use our collective purchasing power to end apparel industry sweatshop conditions around the world. Today is the day that will be seen a decade from now as the key day in launching this multi-state initiative, and you gathered here will be seen as the leaders who made it happen.

At least that is how I hope this day and this meeting will be remembered. Whether or not this meeting is remembered is up to you gathered here, and it depends on whether we can get the work done that we have come together to tackle. Let this meeting in Harrisburg be productive. Let a coalition of Governors, Mayors, States and Cities emerge.

The time has come not only for states to join together, but for each of us to step up and agree to participate – to hammer out the details here in Harrisburg and in the coming months of what our consortium should be, how it should be governed and how it should work. I hope you will make the commitment to do this, will sign the agreement to work toward joining a coalition for sweatfree procurement, and will continue with this initiative.

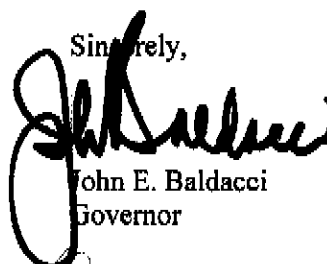
The policy paper being circulated at this meeting is a good start. The states and cities need to review it, adjust it if necessary, and make it their own so that together we can use it as a model for our own conduct and a message for convincing others to take up this cause with us.

Maine adopted a Code of Conduct in 2001 and we have continued to improve it ever since. It has made a difference and sent a message, but Maine is here at this meeting because we know we are stronger together. I stand with the other states and cities here, and I thank you for standing with Maine.

Good luck with your work. I am looking forward to learning of the results of this important gathering and to getting all of us on the road to success in ending sweatshops.

Together we can do this. Together we should do this.

Sincerely,



John E. Baldacci
Governor

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