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MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FRED MILLER
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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To Whom It May Concern:

Every year, the State of Michigan spends tens of millions of our tax dollars buying uniforms and other clothing for public employees, like police officers and firefighters. Unfortunately, many of these products are being made in sweatshops, where workers, mostly young women and teenage girls, are forced to work long hours in unsafe conditions for unfair wages.

The report being put out today by SweatFree Communities highlights that many companies that our state contracts with are not living up to our expectations as ethical employers. It should be our goal as a state to work together with these companies to improve working conditions at the factories that produce the goods purchased by our state.

To that end, I am fully supportive of adopting a sweatshop-free purchasing policy for our state. The best way this can be achieved is by joining the SweatFree Consortium. By working with other state and local governments, we can pool purchasing power to create a viable market for sweatfree manufacturing.

The State of Michigan needs to lead by example and take a stand against unethical labor practices. Unfair trade agreements have hurt Michigan's economy, and by taking a stand against sweatshop produced goods we can demonstrate our opposition to the race to the bottom that these trade agreements often lead to. I look forward to working with the administration and in the legislature on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Fred Miller
State Representative

FM/jr