

Maine Clean Clothes Alliance

September 25, 2007

The Honorable John E. Baldacci
Office of the Governor
#1 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0001

Dear Governor Baldacci,

We thank you for your outstanding leadership in the movement to end public purchasing from sweatshops. We would also like to ask that you take additional steps necessary to bring your vision to fruition.

We are grateful for your initiative to create the Governors' Coalition for Sweatfree Procurement Worker Rights, and for your support for pioneering state anti-sweatshop legislation.

We are also grateful for the work and support of members of State Government who skillfully implement Maine's sweatfree procurement legislation and help to reach out to other states to exchange ideas and leverage resources to advance sweatfree purchasing. In particular we wish to acknowledge and applaud the work of your Director of the Bureau of General Services, Chip Gavin; and Betty Lamoreau, Director of the Division of Purchases.

As a leader in the sweatfree movement, Maine has already helped to level the playing field for ethical businesses and create demand for better working conditions in the global apparel industry. Most significantly, Maine has helped foment the beginning of a collaborative effort among states, cities, and other public entities to end taxpayer support for sweatshops.

But this is only the beginning. We need continued strong leadership from Maine in this growing national movement in order to realize its goals.

Toward this end, we hope that you take three important actions.

First, formally join the new State and Local Government Sweatfree Consortium.

The State and Local Government Sweatfree Consortium represents the merger of your Governors' Coalition for Sweatfree Procurement and Worker Rights with cities and other public entities working towards the same goal of ending taxpayer support for sweatshops. The Consortium will pool resources for investigations and monitoring of supplier factories and coordinate the implementation and enforcement of sweatfree standards to ensure compliance with codes of conduct established by states and localities. Currently in formation, the Consortium is directed by an interim Steering Committee which includes representatives from three states (Chip Gavin represents Maine), two cities, a major school district, as well as labor rights experts and human rights advocates associated with universities, non-governmental organizations, and unions.

Second, make a financial contribution to the Consortium campaign to help recruit additional members.

The interim Steering Committee seeks to launch the Consortium when public entities purchasing a combined \$100 million in apparel have joined. We now are about half way

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there This market will provide economic leverage to effectively enforce sweatfree procurement policies, and support good jobs for thousands of apparel workers worldwide.

Reaching the \$100 million goal will depend on adequate resources for outreach and education to attract a sufficient number of significant public entities to join the Consortium. The interim Steering Committee encourages contributions to this effort on a voluntary basis. Funding will support an organizer who will work with SweatFree Communities, a non-profit 501(c) (3) non-governmental organization which coordinates the Consortium campaign, and serves as the interim fiscal sponsor for the Consortium.

Third, personally contact other governors to encourage them to join the Consortium.

The Consortium can play a decisive role in ending apparel industry sweatshop conditions around the world, and ensuring that ethical businesses can compete for government contracts. But it needs a true champion, a leader willing to embrace it and persuade other leaders to do likewise. We believe you deserve to be that champion, and would be proud to see you as the acknowledged national leader of the Consortium.

We look forward to continued collaboration with you and members of State Government.

Thank you again for your leadership and commitment to ending public purchasing from sweatshops.

Sincerely,

Pat Carlton, President
On behalf of USW Local # 4-9

Ken Cline, Executive Committee
On behalf of Sierra Club, Maine

Charlie Conley, President
On behalf of Central Maine Central Labor Council

Jamilla El-Shafei, Coordinator
On behalf of Kennebunk Peace Department

Jon Falk, Director
On behalf of Peace through Interamerican Community Action

Linda Fairbrother, Secretary
On behalf of USW Local 1188

Ed Gorham, President
On behalf of Maine AFL-CIO

Kate Harris, Economic Justice Committee Liaison
On behalf of Unitarian Universalist Church of Belfast

Daphne Loring, Coordinator
On behalf of Maine Fair Trade Campaign

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Peter Kellman, President*
Southern Maine Labor Council

Ernie Loring, Representative
On behalf of UNITE HERE, New England Joint Board

Zack Matthews, Staff Representative*
AFSCME Council 93

Jack McKay, President
On behalf of Eastern Maine Labor Council

Pauline Michaud, Coordinator
On behalf of Southern Maine Clean Clothes Campaign

Danny Muller, Executive Director
On behalf of Peace Action Maine

Marc R. Mutty, Director of Public Affairs
On behalf of Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland

Eric Odier-Fink, Co-Owner
On behalf of Justice Clothing

Renee Overlock, President
On behalf of NALC Local 391

Cynthia Phinney, Business Manager
On behalf of IBEW Local 1837

Bill Pienta, District Director
On behalf of USW District 4

Bonnie Preston, Downeast Coordinator
On behalf of Alliance for Democracy, Downeast

Neena Quirion, Director
On behalf of Maine Council of Senior Citizens

Bruce Roy, President
On behalf of Maine Labor Council, USW

Jill Saxby, Executive Director
On behalf of Maine Council of Churches

William Slavick, Regional Coordinator
On behalf of Pax Christi

Maryanne Turowski, Legislative and Policy Director
On behalf of MSEA SEIU Local 1989

*Signed in an individual capacity.