

September 5, 2005
Managua, Nicaragua

Dear Betty,

Warm greetings from Nicaragua, the land of lakes and volcanos, located in the heart of Central America.

The organization that I represent (PASE – Professionals for Social and Company Audits) is an organization that monitors and verifies codes of conduct in Nicaragua, in addition to working in the areas of education, investigation, and social dialogue. We are part of a network of Central American and Caribbean organizations whose goal is to promote good labor practices from a perspective of social, company, corporate, and multi-sector responsibility.

Our experience in this field of work has shown us that when there are clear policies and concrete laws that insure compliance with internationally recognized labor standards and local legislation, just relations between workers and the industries, companies, and factories they work for can be obtained.

With much concern, our organization is observing the initiatives under development by the State of Maine. These initiatives will diminish the effectiveness and strength of Maine's existing code of conduct.

In no country where such initiatives have been promoted and adopted have there been good results. Workers will have to look elsewhere to defend their labor rights because of the requirement to take an oath [judicial instrument requirement].

It is with this sentiment that we have arrived at our opinion regarding the proposed initiative. We hope that the State of Maine will know to listen to our voices and experience regarding this initiative.

On behalf of my self and PASE, I send my respect to you and to the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

Dr. Alberto Legall Torres
PASE-Nicaragua