



NEWS



Professional Performance Uniforms

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Elbeco Joins Coalition of States in Denouncing Sweatshop Manufacturing Practices

READING, PA – NOVEMBER 6, 2006 – Elbeco®, a Pennsylvania-based uniform manufacturer, recently endorsed the SweatFree Communities campaign for worker rights. The company is the first manufacturer of professional performance uniforms for police, tactical, fire, EMT and the U.S. Postal Service to join the campaign. The SweatFree coalition includes government leaders, labor unions, religious institutions, school districts and others working to end unfair labor practices at home and around the world.

Without their knowledge, taxpayers' dollars are enriching sweatshop owners who use degrading and morally repugnant business practices. The SweatFree Communities campaign seeks to end the procurement of goods made under sweatshop conditions and proposes independent oversight for factories working under state and local government contract.

The governors of Maine, New Jersey and Pennsylvania recently joined forces through a consortium aimed at collaborative and coordinated enforcement of sweatfree procurement measures. The Governor's Coalition for Sweatfree Procurement and Workers' Rights will pool resources for enforcement and direct procurement dollars to sweatfree factories.

"Elbeco has always stood for worker rights, fair wages and decent working conditions," said David Lurio, president of Elbeco. "Now we stand alongside courageous leaders like Governor Edward Rendell, and others, who endorse SweatFree's procurement recommendations."

SweatFree Communities aims to end degrading and inhumane employment practices, while also leveling the playing field for manufacturers who operate with moral integrity.

"The SweatFree campaign is about using state and local government purchasing dollars as a catalyst for change. We aim to level the playing field for ethical businesses and to advance justice for sweatshop workers," said Bjorn Claeson, executive director, SweatFree Communities. "When states and cities refuse to spend tax dollars on sweatshop goods, the industry will have to change."

Global garment manufacturing has become increasingly competitive. Thousands of dollars in contracts are awarded daily, regardless of the conditions workers often face -- including unjust wages, unsafe workplaces, and harassment.

"This is a battle for human rights, for the dignity of workers and for the working poor everywhere," said Lurio. "We know from experience that it's possible to run a business with integrity -- and we think the American public cares enough to ensure our government is buying responsibly."

About Elbeco

Elbeco is family-owned and operated since 1907. Early customers included employees of the Reading Railroad. Later, the company found its niche in uniform manufacturing when it won a contract to supply uniforms for the New York World's Fair. Today, Elbeco produces professional performance uniforms for public safety workers including police, tactical, fire and emergency medical technicians as well as for U.S. Postal Service employees. Elbeco is a UNITE Here! union employer with close to 400 employees in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Missouri. Some manufacturing is contracted to facilities in Honduras and Mexico.

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