

City of Olympia, Washington
RESOLUTION NO. M-1545

A RESOLUTION Establishing Guidelines to Address the Purchase of Clothing and Footwear from Responsible and Ethical Contractors.

WHEREAS, it is in the interest of the City of Olympia to purchase clothing and footwear from responsible and ethical contractors who provide quality goods and services at a competitive price; and

WHEREAS, certain manufacturers in these industries in the United States of America and around the world have been found to maintain sweatshop conditions including below-subsistence wages; unhealthy and unsafe working environments; excessively long hours; child, indentured, and prison labor; persistent disregard for local and international labor laws and workplace regulations; and systematic repression of fundamental women's rights, human rights, and workers' rights; and

WHEREAS, the City of Olympia is guided by the philosophy of sustainability, which tasks citizens to consider how today's decisions will affect the quality of life for future generations with the goal of establishing ways of living that can be sustained indefinitely; and

WHEREAS, the City of Olympia resolution of Sustainable City Philosophy states: "The City of Olympia acknowledges its responsibility for leadership in creating a sustainable community locally, regionally, and globally. A sustainable community is one that persists over generations and is far-sighted enough, flexible enough, and wise enough to maintain its natural, economic, social, and political support systems"; and

WHEREAS, standards outlining responsible and ethical practices can be found in: the International Labor Organization's Convention on the Rights of the Child, the United Nations Declaration on Gender Equity, the U.N. General Assembly Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and

WHEREAS, sweatshops threaten the jobs and wages of workers in our region and nation, undermine our goals for a sustainable economy, and exploit workers in developing economies as well as in the United States; and

WHEREAS, appropriate government purchasing practices can be effective in combating sweatshop production practices and ensuring the appropriate expenditure of public funds; and

WHEREAS, information about the manufacturing practices of clothing providers is increasingly available through distributors, union-sponsored organizations such as UNITE, non-profit citizens groups, independent non-profit monitoring organizations, and investment companies that screen for "socially responsible" companies; and

WHEREAS, current vendors for City purchases of clothing and footwear are valued business associates, and the City will inform our current vendors about how to comply with City purchasing requirements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OLYMPIA THAT:

Section 1. The City will implement sweatshop-free purchasing guidelines in phases. In Phase I, to be implemented by July 1, 2004, City staff making bulk purchases of t-shirts, sweatshirts, and baseball caps shall choose from a list of manufacturers proven to be free of sweatshop working conditions, and offering items at a competitive price. Application of sweatshop-free purchasing guidelines to other items of clothing or footwear shall occur in future phases as directed by the Olympia City Council.

Section 2. All requests for bid or quote on t-shirts, sweatshirts, and baseball caps shall include a copy of this Resolution.

Section 3. To determine whether a bid is responsive in terms of these criteria, the City may consider information obtained independently from the bid from the following: the manufacturer, the distributor from whom the goods are purchased, reputable national and international organizations, well documented media reports, and well-documented information from local citizens groups that are knowledgeable about this topic.

Section 4. City staff shall provide individual employees who receive a clothing or footwear allowance, or who make reimbursable purchases of work clothes or footwear, information on local retailers, wholesalers, or known manufacturers of sweatshop-free items, and encourage those employees to make purchases from those sources.

Section 5. The City Council Budget Committee shall review the progress in implementing this resolution annually through 2006 to determine its effectiveness in assisting the City and its employees in purchasing covered goods from responsible and ethical manufacturers, any impact that this policy may have on the ability of the City to purchase such items at competitive prices, and the timing and means of including additional clothing items under the purchasing guidelines.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 9th day of March, 2004.

LAURA L. WARE
MAYOR PRO TEM