

CITY OF NORTH OLMSTED

Resolution No. 97-9

BY: Mayor Boyle

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION IN ITS POLICY OF PURCHASING, LEASING, RENTING OR TAKING ON CONSIGNMENT GOODS FOR USE AND FOR RESALE BY CITY-OWNED ENTERPRISES THAT ARE PRODUCED UNDER DECENT WORKING CONDITIONS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY, AS AMENDED.

WHEREAS, the current administration has established a policy of not purchasing, leasing, renting or taking on consignment goods for use or for resale at city-owned enterprises which were produced under harsh or "sweatshop" conditions, and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of this council to support the right of citizens around the world to work in a safe and healthy workplace at reasonable compensation by not purchasing products made under sweatshop conditions.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH OLMSTED, COUNTY OF CUYAHOGA AND STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1: The following points shall be used by the administration to qualify goods as not being produced under sweatshop conditions:

A. Child Labor. The factory does not employ anybody younger than the legal age for children to work in the country in which the factory is located, and regardless of the legal age, does not employ anybody younger than age 15.

B. Forced labor. The factory does not use forced labor of any kind--prison labor, indentured labor or bonded labor.

C. Wages and benefits. The factory pays a wage which enables its employees to meet their basic needs for food, shelter, clothing and medical care and to set aside money for future purchases. The factory also provides all benefits required by law in their country and compensates workers for overtime.

D. Hours of work. Employees are not required to work more than 48 hours per weekly or less if the law of the country in which the factory is located sets a shorter work week

E. Worker rights. The factory is a workplace free from physical, sexual or verbal harassment. Employees have the right to speak up about conditions in the factory without fear of retaliation and have the right to form unions of their own choosing without employer intimidation.

F. Health and safety. The factory provides a safe and healthy working environment.

These standards must be communicated to every worker, supervisor and manager in the factory, orally and in writing, in the language understood by each person.

Section 2: That the city is prohibited, to the extent possible, from purchasing, leasing, renting or taking on consignment goods for use or for resale at city-owned enterprises which were produced under sweatshop conditions. The administration shall maintain a policy of evaluating suppliers products concerning the working conditions under which the products are manufactured.

Section 3: That the administration is directed to notify the city's suppliers of this policy in writing and to inquire about the working conditions under which their goods are produced. To the extent possible, goods from suppliers who will not state that their products are not made under sweatshop conditions will not be purchased.

Section 4: That this resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure immediately necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety and welfare of the people of the City of North Olmsted and further provided the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all members of Council, it shall take effect and be in force immediately upon its passage and approval by the Mayor.

PASSED: _____

ATTEST:

BARBARA SEMAN
CLERK OF COUNCIL

JAMES D. BOEHMER
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

APPROVED: _____

First Reading: _____
Second Reading: _____
Third Reading: _____
Committee: _____

ED BOYLE, MAYOR

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM

MICHAEL R. GAREAU
DIRECTOR OF LAW

(MY EMAIL TO MY NORTH OLMSTED COUNCILMAN, PAUL BARKER ON JULY 24, 2007)

Dear Mr. Barker (and Mr. Kennedy),

My name is Augie Pacetti and my wife and I live in Ward 2 on West 230th Street. I found your contact information on the North Olmsted City website. I had a question.

A few years ago, I read an article that discussed how the City of North Olmsted had banned purchasing municipal products that were made in sweatshops. I was particularly interested in this since I have recently been a theology teacher (in a senior course called Social Justice) at Padua Franciscan High School in Parma, and I would often discuss sweatshops and labor issues with my students. I was also interested and proud that my city would show such leadership (I was a North Olmsted resident [on Vincent Drive from 1978-1986] and I am currently a resident again [since of April 2005]). I thought that this was a bold and progressive move that rightly drew a lot of national and international attention, as North Olmsted was one of the first in the country to adopt such a code.

I was wondering... is this law/procedure/code still effective in the city? Is there any way you might be able to locate the text of the law in the city's codified ordinances for me?

One of the reasons why I was looking for this is because I am also one of the co-chairs of an organization called Catholic Schools for Peace and Justice (www.cspj.net) representing the 23 Catholic high schools in the Diocese of Cleveland. Next year I will be a campus minister at Saint Ignatius High School, and as part of this network, one of our possible initiatives is to introduce fair-trade (non-sweatshop) buying procedures to our schools for some/all of the products we purchase. If North Olmsted has a procedure that I may be able to use as an example for our schools, that would give us a good head start.

Thanks for all of your help. I have attached an internet article that I have found that outlines this Sweatshop purchasing ban.

Peace,

Augie Pacetti