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## October 2006

### Newsletter #11

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### Please Support Our Work to End Sweatshops

SweatFree Communities needs your help to be an even stronger force for worker justice. Please donate now so that we can spend less time raising money and more time organizing! We deeply appreciate any amount you can give. You may [give online](#) or send a check to 30 Blackstone Street, Bangor ME 04401.

### Sweatfree Consortium Campaign Update

As a result of dedicated organizing by sweatfree state campaigns, we now have three governors on board the State and Local Government Sweatfree Consortium! Maine Governor Baldacci was the first to signal his support for a consortium to investigate worker rights violations in factories producing apparel for states and local governments, proposing a governors' coalition to help create the consortium. In the past month Pennsylvania Governor Rendell and New Jersey Governor Corzine have joined Governor Baldacci.

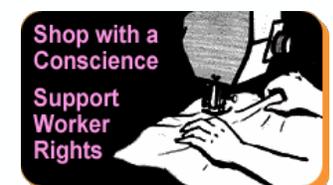
[Read more](#) about the campaign and how to get active. Check out [our media releases and news hits](#).

### Join the Growing List of Campaign Endorsers!

As of today, 57 organizations have endorsed the campaign. Encourage your organization to endorse too! Check out the list of endorsers and use the online endorsement form [here](#). Help us get to 100 organizations by the end of the year!

### Election Day is Coming Up... Be a Bird-Dog!

Be a... what? A bird-dog! That is, an activist who attends candidate events and asks candidates about their positions. In this case, we encourage you to ask gubernatorial candidates to commit to adopting sweatfree purchasing rules in your state. Educate the candidate about your position and the opportunity to end your state's support of sweatshops, and raise public



awareness. Tips, talking points, and more [available here](#).

### Quality Plant Workers Organize for Severance Pay

After Quality plant in El Salvador burned down, the sewing operations were moved to another plant fifty miles away. Workers were told they could simply quit or travel the extra distance adding cost and hours to their already onerous schedule. In negotiations with management, and with the support of [letters](#) from international human rights organizations, including SweatFree Communities, workers won their initial demand of 75% of owed severance pay last week.

Workers at Quality Factory made school uniforms destined for schools in the U.S. under Elder Manufacturing's "Tom Sawyer" label.

### Campaign Updates

**Berkeley:** The Berkeley Commission on Labor voted unanimously in support of a sweatfree purchasing policy. [More info...](#)

**Maine:** The State of Maine's newly established Purchasing Code of Conduct Working Group has said YES to a multi-state consortium to coordinate enforcement of sweatfree procurement laws. The group of four worker advocates and four businesses has unanimously agreed that the monitoring arm of such a consortium should be entirely independent of the industries monitored. Contact [bjorn@sweatfree.org](mailto:bjorn@sweatfree.org) or [read more...](#)

**New York:** A recent survey of schools shows that over 100 New York school districts have adopted sweatfree purchasing policies. Yes, one hundred! A state law adopted in 2001 enabled districts to adopt sweatfree policies, and many went ahead to do that. New York State Labor-Religion Coalition is following up with these schools to learn how the policies have been put into effect. Contact: [markl@labor-religion.org](mailto:markl@labor-religion.org)

**Saint Paul School District:** Students in St. Paul successfully organized to get the school district to adopt a sweatfree purchasing policy. Check our [media coverage page](#) for a link to watch the online video by WCCO, "St. Paul students spearhead sweatshop ban."

### New Resources from SweatFree Communities

**Materiales disponibles ahora en español / Materials now available in Spanish:** Con mucho alegría anunciamos que algunos de nuestras materiales estén disponibles en español: [www.sweatfree.org/esp](http://www.sweatfree.org/esp).

**Written Off - Fighting Back:** Reflections by Bjorn Claeson from his meeting with garment workers in eastern Pennsylvania. [Read the article...](#)

**Find out what candidates for governor think about sweatshops!** [See our talking points and tips.](#)

See our [resources section](#) for many more resources!

### Maquilapolis on PBS

Maquilapolis, a film that provides insight into environmental devastation and labor violations in the maquilas of Tijuana, will be on PBS on Tuesday, October 10, 2006. Tell your friends!

Check the [PBS website](#) for broadcast times in your area.

SweatFree Communities is glad to be an outreach partner of Maquilapolis. The story is especially powerful because its basis is organizing and empowerment; much of the footage is women workers' own documentation of their lives and stories.

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