



**What is the Travis County SweatFree Policy?** The proposed Travis County SweatFree Policy would apply to county garment purchases. It would require the county to buy only from contractors and subcontractors who *do not engage in sweatshop abuses*, defined by the U.S. Department of Labor as violations of two or more of the most basic labor laws. These include sexual abuse or intimidation, fire safety or illegal workplace hazards, wage and overtime violations, or the use of child, indentured or slave labor.

**Why Does Travis County Need A SweatFree Policy?** Each year, Travis County spends a significant amount of taxpayer money for garment purchases - yet our current process does not evaluate vendors for sweatshop abuses, despite evidence from an independent monitoring agency that some of the factories owned by Travis County garment suppliers have had major labor rights violations. By adopting a SweatFree Policy, the county will make an enforceable commitment to responsible contracting and will ensure that public funds are used only for legal and humane workplaces that reflect the values of our community.

**Will This Really Make A Difference?** One shopper alone can't change sweatshops. But large institutional purchasers have the power to gain the attention of manufacturers and contractors, prompting reform in a way that individual consumers cannot. When independent monitoring agencies have cited foreign factories for abuses, many have taken steps to reform their practices. More than 50 cities and counties nationwide have already adopted sweat free policies – and the power to end sweatshop abuses grows with each county that joins the effort.

**How Much Will It Cost Travis County To Do the Right Thing?** The proposed *State and Local Government Sweatfree Consortium* would provide monitoring of factories, based on the Worker Rights Consortium model currently used by over 150 universities. Under this model, cities would share monitoring costs by contributing 1% of their total garment purchases, with a minimum of \$5,000 per city. Travis County spent approximately \$420,000 on garments in the 2005-2006 fiscal year, which would make its annual fee about \$5,000.

**Who Supports the SweatFree Policy?** The Travis County SweatFree Policy is supported by the Central Labor Council, Austin Religion and Labor Network, Texas Fair Trade Coalition, Liveable City, the American Friends Service Committee, St. Ignatius Catholic Church, United Christian Church, Oxfam UT-Austin, the Congregational Church of Austin, Ten Thousand Villages of Austin, and many other organizations and community leaders.

**It's the Least We Can Do!** Many Travis County families are very lucky. We won the lottery at birth. But elsewhere in the world, kids just like our own are working long hours in dangerous, badly-ventilated factories. Mothers are toiling as indentured workers, far from their families, forced deeper into debt each month for company-mandated food and rent. It's hard to think about this every time we buy a T-shirt, but that doesn't mean it's not there. Adding Travis County's voice – and purchasing power - to the call for sweatshop reform is one small way our county can help to make a big change in the world.

*The campaign to Make Texas Sweat Free is a project of the Texas Fair Trade Coalition, a registered 501(c)(4) nonprofit, 1106 Lavaca St., Suite 102, Austin, TX 78701*