

CAST Fact Sheet | Slavery in Our Supply Chains

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It could be in the clothing you wear, the food you eat, the materials used to build your house, your school, your car... Products made using slave labor, including the worst forms of child labor, exist throughout the modern industrial supply chain.

Today it is estimated that nearly 12.3 million people — equal to nearly one-third of California's total population — are working in some form of forced labor worldwide. Of those, nearly 2.5 million people are estimated to have been trafficked.

At home, it is estimated that there are 10,000 forced laborers working in the US at any given time. The U.S. State Department estimates that between 14,500 and 17,500 victims are trafficked into the US each year. California is one of the top four destination states for trafficking victims in the United States. Over 500 victims from 18 countries were identified in California between 1998 and 2003.

Existing state and federal laws make human trafficking a crime, while providing various remedies and supports to victims. Yet, state and federal laws have done little to address the growing markets that consume products tainted with slavery and trafficking.

In September 2009, the US Department of Labor released its "List of Goods Produced by Child or Forced Labor." The report found nearly 122 goods from 58 countries that are believed to be tainted with forced and/or child labor.

Undoubtedly, many of those goods are consumed in California—home to the 10th largest economy in the world with hundreds of billions of dollars of imports pouring into the state each year. California consumers and business—by the nature and scope of their purchasing power—are uniquely positioned to eradicate slavery and trafficking through their purchasing choices.



As a nation and as members of the global community, we reject the proposition that it is acceptable to pursue economic gain through the forced labor of other human beings or the exploitation of children in the workplace. However, we are aware that these problems remain widespread in today's global economy. Indeed, we face these problems in our own country.

The International Labor Organization estimates that over 12 million persons world-wide are working in some form of forced labor or bondage and that more than 200 million children are at work, many in hazardous forms of labor.

The most vulnerable persons – including women, indigenous groups, and migrants – are the most likely to fall into these situations and the current global economic crisis has only exacerbated their vulnerability.

- The Department of Labor 2009

The Coalition to Abolish Slavery & Trafficking (CAST) is one of first organizations in the country dedicated exclusively to assisting trafficked persons. CAST provides direct services to meet the immediate food, shelter, medical and legal needs of trafficked persons. In spring of 2004, CAST opened the first shelter in the country for survivors of trafficking. CAST also conducts advocacy and training to law enforcement, service providers, policymakers and the general public to improve survivors' access to resources. To learn more about CAST visit our website at: www.castla.org.

What You Can Do

California Residents: Call your assembly representatives before August 2, 2010 to ask them to support two important bills that propose legislation that seek to address human trafficking and forced labor in California's supply chains.

To find out how to contact your assembly member, visit: www.leginfo.ca.gov or email supplychain@castla.org

The California Supply Chain Transparency Act of 2010 (SB 657) would require large companies doing business in California to disclose the extent to which the company:

- ✓ Uses 3rd party verification to evaluate and address human trafficking and slavery risks in product supply chains
- ✓ Conducts independent, unannounced audits of suppliers to ensure compliance with company standards on trafficking slavery
- ✓ Maintains internal accountability for employees and contractors failing to meet company standards on slavery and trafficking
- ✓ Provides company employees and management training on mitigating risks of slavery and trafficking in supply chains

The Slave and Sweat Free Code of Conduct for goods sold to the State of California (SB 1231) would:

- ✓ Amend current the current code to expand the definition of prohibited labor,
- ✓ Expand the penalty for noncompliance to 2 years of removal from the State's bidder list
- ✓ Improve the current contractor responsibility program
- ✓ Use the purchasing power of the state of California to reduce the demand for goods made with slave, forced or abusive forms of labor



Human Trafficking Survivor, Flor Molina, is an outspoken advocate for increased transparency in supply chains. In 2003 she was trafficked from Mexico and enslaved in a sweatshop in Los Angeles.

Other ideas:

Buy Fair Trade. Fair trade certification is available at over 40,000 retail establishments in the US and allows consumers to vote for a better world with their dollars.

Fair Trade principles include:

- Fair Prices For Suppliers
- Fair Labor Conditions
- Democratic & Transparent Organizations
- Community Development
- Environmental Sustainability

For more information, visit www.fairtrade.net

Contact your favorite retail and grocery stores, toy companies, and designers to ask if, and how, they monitor their supply chains. Let them know that ethical business practices are important to you as their valued customer.

Ask your employer if you have a Corporate Social Responsibility Department or Division and ask them what they are doing to ensure that they have detailed information about their supply chain and ethical labor practices company wide.

Research Socially Responsible Investing (SRI): Find out if your pension funds are invested in socially responsible companies:
<http://www.calvert.com/sri-kwvo.html>

Investing in human resilience

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