

2011-2012 Regular Sessions

I N S E N A T E

(PREFILED)

January 5, 2011

Introduced by Sen. HASSELL-THOMPSON -- read twice and ordered printed,  
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing a sweat-free code of conduct for apparel licensed by the colleges and universities of the state university; and to amend the labor law, in relation to the special task force for the apparel industry

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as  
2 the "ethical business conduct in higher education act".  
3 S 2. Legislative intent. The legislature hereby finds that the state  
4 university of New York has not responded to decades old requests that  
5 its campuses disaffiliate their business relationships with sweatshops  
6 in the production and licensing of campus apparel. It is now clear that  
7 voluntary action by each campus is no longer an option and that the time  
8 has come to require a system-wide set of rules and regulations be put in  
9 place by the chancellor and board of trustees of the state university of  
10 New York.  
11 For years, lawmakers, religious and labor groups have criticized state  
12 university campus' affiliations with apparel manufacturers who are  
13 indifferent to the fact that workers making university apparel face  
14 abusive treatment, excessive working hours, dangerous conditions and  
15 wages that are inadequate to meet basic needs.  
16 There continues to be a strong demand that all state university  
17 campuses diligently adopt sweat-free standards in the purchase of  
18 athletic apparel and in the licensing of campus merchandise. Advocates  
19 on behalf of working people deplore the repression and exploitation of  
20 apparel workers in Latin America and elsewhere in the world. The univer-  
21 sities and colleges of the state university of New York should be a  
22 model for ethical business conduct, both for their students and the

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[ ] is old law to be omitted.

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1 broader public. It is past time for the state university system adminis-  
2 tration and all its campuses to affiliate with the sweat-free and worker  
3 rights work of the Worker Rights Consortium and the Designated Supplier  
4 Program and end their business relationships that are de facto support  
5 for sweatshop conditions.

6 Presently 60 of the 64 state university campuses have failed to take  
7 the example or lead of the universities at Albany and Buffalo, which  
8 have adopted the Designated Supplier Program, and the colleges at New  
9 Paltz and Cortland, all four of which have affiliated with the Worker  
10 Rights Consortium to ensure sweat-free manufacturing.

11 It is obvious that where there has been strong leadership and commit-  
12 ment to protecting worker rights this issue has been resolved. However,  
13 we cannot wait indefinitely for the other 60 campuses to engage in  
14 ethical business behavior that demonstrates our national respect for  
15 human rights, worker rights and anti-child labor rights.

16 It is well understood by organized labor, religious organizations and  
17 social justice groups that the apparel industry continues to operate  
18 under a paradigm of cost-cutting without respect to human consequence,  
19 the tragic results of which are the sweatshop conditions that plague the  
20 supply chains of university licensed apparel. All state university  
21 campuses that have not already done so must adopt sweat-free codes of  
22 conduct to which apparel manufacturers producing university apparel must  
23 adhere.

24 It is the findings of the legislature that in order to comprehensively  
25 remedy this situation it must be required that the state university  
26 administration put in place strict policies for all its campuses with  
27 regard to how their apparel is manufactured. It is unacceptable that  
28 after all the years of calls to end such practices, campus administra-  
29 tors continue to ignore the violations of human rights that take place  
30 in order for their campus apparel to be manufactured and sold.

31 S 3. The education law is amended by adding a new section 361 to read  
32 as follows:

33 S 361. SWEAT-FREE CODE OF CONDUCT. 1. THE CHANCELLOR OF THE STATE  
34 UNIVERSITY SHALL, ON OR BEFORE JANUARY THIRTY-FIRST, TWO THOUSAND  
35 TWELVE, DEVELOP AND DRAFT A SWEAT-FREE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE PURCHASE  
36 AND LICENSING OF APPAREL BY STATE-OPERATED INSTITUTIONS. SUCH CODE, TO  
37 THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, SHALL MEET OR EXCEED THE LABOR STANDARDS, AND  
38 BUSINESS AND FACTORY DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS ENUMERATED IN WORKER RIGHTS  
39 CONSORTIUM'S MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT. THE CODE SHALL REQUIRE EACH  
40 STATE-OPERATED INSTITUTION TO AFFILIATE WITH THE WORKER RIGHTS CONSORTI-  
41 UM AND PARTICIPATE IN THE DESIGNATED SUPPLIER PROGRAM FOR THE PURPOSE OF  
42 EFFECTIVELY ENFORCING THE PROVISIONS OF SUCH CODE. FURTHERMORE, THE  
43 SWEAT-FREE CODE OF CONDUCT SHALL PROVIDE THAT EVERY CONTRACT BETWEEN A  
44 STATE-OPERATED INSTITUTION AND ANY APPAREL MANUFACTURER SHALL INCLUDE A  
45 PROVISION PROVIDING FOR THE TERMINATION AND NULLIFICATION OF SUCH  
46 CONTRACT UPON ANY FINDING OF A VIOLATION OF THE SWEAT-FREE CODE OF  
47 CONDUCT IN FACILITIES THAT SUCH MANUFACTURER OPERATES OR FROM WHOM SUCH  
48 MANUFACTURER PURCHASES PRODUCTS. SUCH CODE OF CONDUCT SHALL PROVIDE  
49 THAT NOTICE OF ANY SUCH VIOLATION MAY BE PROVIDED BY THE WORKER RIGHTS  
50 CONSORTIUM. THE SWEAT-FREE CODE OF CONDUCT SHALL PROVIDE FOR A REMEDI-  
51 ATION PROCESS WHEREBY ANY SUCH MANUFACTURER MAY BE GRANTED THE OPPORTU-  
52 NITY TO TAKE CORRECTIVE ACTION PRIOR TO CONTRACT TERMINATION. SUCH REME-  
53 DIATION PROCESS, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, SHALL REFLECT THE PROCESS  
54 DESCRIBED IN THE MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT OF THE WORKER RIGHTS CONSORTIUM.

55 2. SUCH CHANCELLOR SHALL, ON OR BEFORE JANUARY THIRTY-FIRST, TWO THOU-  
56 SAND TWELVE, SUBMIT TO THE STATE UNIVERSITY TRUSTEES THE CODE OF CONDUCT

1 DEVELOPED AND DRAFTED PURSUANT TO SUBDIVISION ONE OF THIS SECTION. SUCH  
2 CODE OF CONDUCT SHALL BE ADOPTED BY THE STATE UNIVERSITY TRUSTEES ON OR  
3 BEFORE MARCH THIRTIETH, TWO THOUSAND TWELVE, AS RULES AND REGULATIONS  
4 APPLICABLE TO ALL STATE-OPERATED INSTITUTIONS. SUCH RULES AND REGU-  
5 LATIONS SHALL INCLUDE PROVISIONS FOR THE ENFORCEMENT THEREOF TO ENSURE  
6 FULL COMPLIANCE THEREWITH BY STATE OPERATED INSTITUTIONS.

7 3. ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER FIRST, TWO THOUSAND TWELVE, THE CHANCELLOR  
8 OF THE STATE UNIVERSITY SHALL SUBMIT A PRELIMINARY REPORT TO THE GOVER-  
9 NOR AND THE LEGISLATURE WHICH SHALL INCLUDE A LIST OF THE STATE-OPERATED  
10 INSTITUTIONS WHICH HAVE COME INTO COMPLIANCE WITH THE SWEAT-FREE CODE OF  
11 CONDUCT, AND WHEN ANY PURCHASING AND LICENSING AGREEMENTS WITH APPAREL  
12 MANUFACTURERS WHICH HAVE FAILED TO COMPLY WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SUCH  
13 CODE OF CONDUCT, WILL EXPIRE. SUCH PRELIMINARY REPORT SHALL INCLUDE A  
14 LIST OF EACH STATE-OPERATED INSTITUTION THAT HAS AFFILIATED WITH THE  
15 WORKER RIGHTS CONSORTIUM AND PARTICIPATES IN THE DESIGNATED SUPPLIER  
16 PROGRAM.

17 4. THE CHANCELLOR OF THE STATE UNIVERSITY SHALL, ON OR BEFORE JANUARY  
18 THIRTY-FIRST, TWO THOUSAND THIRTEEN, SUBMIT A FINAL REPORT TO THE GOVER-  
19 NOR AND THE LEGISLATURE WHICH SHALL INCLUDE A LIST OF THE STATE-OPERATED  
20 INSTITUTIONS WHICH HAVE COME INTO COMPLIANCE WITH THE SWEAT-FREE CODE OF  
21 CONDUCT, A LIST OF EACH STATE-OPERATED INSTITUTION THAT HAS AFFILIATED  
22 WITH THE WORKER RIGHTS CONSORTIUM AND PARTICIPATES IN THE DESIGNATED  
23 SUPPLIER PROGRAM, AND WHEN ANY PURCHASING AND LICENSING AGREEMENTS WITH  
24 APPAREL MANUFACTURERS WHICH HAVE FAILED TO COMPLY WITH THE PROVISIONS OF  
25 SUCH CODE OF CONDUCT, WILL EXPIRE.

26 5. THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF EACH STATE-OPERATED INSTITUTION  
27 WHICH HAS FAILED TO COMPLY WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT OR AFFILIATE WITH  
28 THE WORKER RIGHTS CONSORTIUM AND PARTICIPATE IN THE DESIGNATED SUPPLIER  
29 PROGRAM ON OR BEFORE MARCH FIRST, TWO THOUSAND THIRTEEN, SHALL SUBMIT,  
30 BY FIRST CLASS MAIL, TO THE GOVERNOR, EACH MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATURE AND  
31 EACH MEMBER OF THE STATE UNIVERSITY TRUSTEES A DETAILED EXPLANATION OF  
32 THE DELAY IN COMPLIANCE AND/OR AFFILIATION, AND WHEN FULL COMPLIANCE,  
33 AFFILIATION AND/OR PARTICIPATION WILL BE COMPLETED.

34 6. ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER FIRST, TWO THOUSAND THIRTEEN, THE STATE  
35 UNIVERSITY TRUSTEES SHALL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR AND THE LEGISLATURE ON  
36 THE ACTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO ENFORCE COMPLIANCE WITH THE  
37 PROVISIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT.

38 7. NO PROVISION OF THIS SECTION, OR ANY RULE, REGULATION OR CODE OF  
39 CONDUCT ADOPTED PURSUANT THERETO, SHALL BE DEEMED TO ESTABLISH ANY POWER  
40 OR DUTY IN VIOLATION OF ANY FEDERAL LAW, RULE OR REGULATION.

41 S 4. The opening paragraph of section 342 of the labor law, as amended  
42 by chapter 41 of the laws of 2004, is amended to read as follows:

43 The commissioner is authorized to establish a special task force for  
44 the purpose of concentrating enforcement of the labor law affecting  
45 production employees in the apparel industry in New York state and  
46 otherwise exercising the duties and powers set forth in sections three  
47 hundred forty-three and three hundred forty-four of this article. NOT  
48 LESS THAN ONE MEMBER OF SUCH TASK FORCE SHALL BE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
49 STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK. Such special task force shall be empowered  
50 to investigate and conduct inspections at locations where an apparel  
51 industry contractor is operating.

52 S 5. This act shall take effect immediately.