

STOP CHILD LABOR



THE CHILD
LABOR
COALITION

CHILD LABOR COALITION

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March 19, 2025

Honorable Lori Chavez-DeRemer
Secretary of Labor
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20210

Secretary Chavez-DeRemer:

We write on behalf of the Child Labor Coalition, which has 38 organizational members, representing millions of Americans who support the work of the Department of Labor's International Labor Affairs Bureau (ILAB). The Child Labor Coalition champions the interests of American workers and businesses by providing advocacy and critical information to inform policy decisions by government and private sector stakeholders. Our members are diverse and include groups that work closely with the business community—organizations such as the Fair Labor Association (FLA), the Centre of Child Rights and Business, Verité, Walden Asset Management, and faith-based organizations such as World Vision, the United Methodist Church, and the National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

We wish to congratulate you on your appointment as Secretary of Labor, and to thank you for your long-standing dedication toward protecting American workers. We are also grateful for your strong comments about the need to combat child labor during your nomination hearing.

We write in support of ILAB, whose mission is to strengthen global labor standards, enforce labor commitments among trading partners, and combat international child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking. As the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA) and the Fair Labor Association noted in a recent letter to you: "We rely on the essential work of ILAB, whose purpose is to work globally to ensure a level playing field for American workers. ILAB's work

reflects the values of the American people as it furthers the interest of American workers and American businesses.”

Each year, ILAB’s Office of Forced Labor, Child Labor, and Human Trafficking researchers conduct country-by-country analysis, searching for products and industries that use prominent levels of exploitative child labor, forced labor, and forced child labor, which often correlate with child and adult trafficking. This cutting-edge research helps direct ILAB’s technical assistance and strategic engagement with foreign governments, businesses, and worker organizations. ILAB strives to raise the standards of those international sectors, ensuring that U.S. companies and workers do not have to compete unfairly with countries and businesses that exploit children and profit from forced labor and human trafficking. ILAB’s in-depth research covers more than 150 countries, including China, with its alarming forced-labor issues.

ILAB currently operates a project in Uzbekistan titled, “Enhancing Transparency and Accountability of Uzbekistan’s Cotton Industry.” Not long ago, rampant state-sponsored child labor helped produce Uzbekistan’s cotton. U.S. businesses and NGOs worked assiduously together to end this labor and human rights abuse, and they continue to work to ensure that any continuing abusive labor is eliminated in Uzbekistan. The ILAB project works to guarantee that Uzbek farmers and workers in the cotton industry have basic rights, and that American cotton and clothing companies are not competing against Uzbek cotton produced under unsafe and inhuman conditions or against apparel and textile companies that take advantage of lower costs associated with labor abuse.

ILAB’s research also provides valuable intelligence to help ensure that parties to international trade agreements strive for a common set of core labor standards.

There is broad bipartisan public support and bipartisan congressional support for the U.S. government to combat child trafficking, and ILAB’s mission closely aligns with this goal, helping to ensure that children do not become victims of labor and sexual exploitation.

By protecting the most vulnerable children in the world, ILAB’s projects serve as an antidote to the cycle of poverty that widespread child labor fuels around the world. ILAB’s work directly improves economic and labor conditions for young workers, who otherwise might feel compelled to migrate to other countries for economic opportunity. In recent years, the U.S. witnessed an influx of young immigrant workers, resulting in troubling illegal child labor in U.S. factories and meat-packing facilities. ILAB’s transformative work helps to reduce the influx of vulnerable children.

ILAB has been a remarkably effective organization, earning great respect from the U.S. business community and foreign governments. The bureau is recognized as a leader in bringing about a dramatic reduction in global child labor over the last quarter century. However, much work

remains to be done: 160 million children—one in ten—are still trapped in child labor, and half that number suffer in hazardous child labor. We must not abandon or diminish the effectiveness of this important work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sally Greenberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Sally Greenberg
Chair, Child Labor Coalition

Child Labor Coalition members:

ACE—Action Against Child Exploitation
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs
Bank Information Center
Beyond Borders
Corporate Accountability Lab
Centre for Child Rights and Business
East Coast Migrant Head Start Project
Fair Labor Association
Fairtrade America
Farmworker Justice
First Focus Campaign for Children
Free the Slaves
Global Campaign for Education—US
Global Fairness Initiative
Global Labor Justice
GoodWeave
Green America
Human Rights Watch
International Initiative to End Child Labor
International Rights Advocates

Lawyers for Good Government
Media Voices for Children
Mighty Earth
Migrant Legal Action Program
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education
National Consumers League
National Education Association
National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association
PACT—Protect All Children from Trafficking
Pact
Prime International – A Social Enterprise
United Methodist Church, Board of Church and Society
UNICEF USA
Verité
Walden Asset Management
Winrock International
World Vision