**Sample letter**

DATE

Dear [public procurement officer],

As a resident of [name of city/county/state], I am writing to propose a way for [name of city/county/state] to save money in the procurement of uniforms and apparel and to ensure respect for the human rights of the workers who make the products.

I have long been concerned about the poor working conditions for apparel workers globally, an issue that has been in the national spotlight since the 2013 collapse of the Rana Plaza factory building in Bangladesh, which crushed 1,134 apparel workers to their deaths. This factory collapse revealed the deadly hazards across the apparel industry in Bangladesh. Human rights violations, abusive and unsafe working conditions are the norm in every major apparel-producing region across the world, as documented in a wide range of academic, media, NGO, and company reports. Production of uniforms and apparel for the public sector is no exception, as, for example, a major *New York Times* investigatory report showed in 2013.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The good news is that our community can do something to address this human rights crisis in the global apparel industry, and it will not cost us more. In fact, we could end up saving money.

The solution, in short, is to piggyback on a uniform management contract between the City of Madison, Wisconsin, and Galls, LLC. This cooperative contract, established in 2015, is available to public sector buyers across the United States and offers public safety, general trade, supervisory and dress apparel, t-shirts and cotton wear used by Fire, Police, Metro Transit and other agencies. Galls, the contractor, had to demonstrate transparency and capacity to respect the human rights of workers in supplier factories during the RFP (request for proposal) phase, and must ensure compliance with international labor rights and safety standards for the duration of the contract. To create capacity for verification, Galls rebates the City of Madison 2% of the contract value to fund independent monitoring of the factories that make the products under the contract. That means for every $100 our community buys off this contract, we generate $2 to help verify compliance.

So, instead of spending the time to develop a new contract to buy apparel, go out for bids or proposals, evaluate bidders, and so on, you may be able to use the Madison contract to buy the uniforms and apparel our agencies need. At the same time, our community would be strengthening respect for human rights of workers who make these products.

As a next step I suggest you review the Madison contract (<http://buysweatfree.org/files/galls.pdf>) to see what products are available that our community may need. Please also feel free to contact the City of Madison Purchasing Supervisor, Brian Pittelli at BPittelli@cityofmadison.com, who can direct you to his contact at Galls.

I look forward to discussing this opportunity to support decent jobs through our community’s procurement while saving time and money. I will call you soon to follow up on this request, and please feel free to contact me directly at the number below.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Signature

Name

Contact information

1. Urbina, Ian, ”US Flouts Own Advice in Procuring Overseas Clothing,” December 22, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/23/world/americas/buying-overseas-clothing-us-flouts-its-own-advice.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)