

Sweatshops and U.

\$0.16 a hat will make the difference.

Go into any store on campus, and you can find clothes with the U. of M logo made in such countries as the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Mexico, and Bangladesh. Factories in many of these countries employ sweatshop labor conditions in the manufacture of the apparel.

What is sweatshop labor?

The BJ&B factory complex in the Dominican Republic (DR) makes 14.4 million baseball caps per year, including caps for U. of M. Working conditions in the factory include:

- Workers wages are \$0.69 per hour, (1/3 necessary to meet a family's basic needs – DR Central Bank Study)
- A required 56 hour work week (illegal under DR law).
- Wage discrimination against women(also illegal in DR).
- Unsafe factories with unclean drinking water.
- Constant physical abuse and sexual harrassment.

What is the solution?¹

The Collegiate Licensing Corporation (CLC), a group of 160 schools including Michigan, has drafted a Code of Conduct for university apparel licensees. This code is supposed to eliminate sweatshop labor, but fails to require:

- **A local living wage** – poverty level wages are the most serious abuse of sweatshop labor.
- **Full public disclosure of factory locations** – allow monitoring of factories for Code compliance.

The University must include these requirements for any meaningful anti-sweatshop Code.

Another \$0.16 out of \$19.95 would raise the wages to meet the cost of living in the Dominican Republic. Can the University (\$1.50 a hat) or the manufacturer give up \$0.16 a hat?

