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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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# HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 914 Session of  
2008

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INTRODUCED BY LENTZ, BELFANTI, BISHOP, BRENNAN, CALTAGIRONE,  
CONKLIN, DeLUCA, DePASQUALE, DeWEESE, DONATUCCI, FABRIZIO,  
FRANKEL, GOODMAN, GRUCELA, HARKINS, JAMES, JOSEPHS, KORTZ,  
KOTIK, KULA, MAHONEY, McCALL, McGEEHAN, MILLARD, MOYER, MURT,  
MYERS, PALLONE, PAYTON, PETRONE, RAMALEY, READSHAW, ROCK,  
SANTONI, SEIP, SHAPIRO, SURRA, VULAKOVICH, WAGNER AND  
J. WHITE, SEPTEMBER 29, 2008

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,  
SEPTEMBER 29, 2008

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## A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Congress of the United States to pass landmark anti-  
2 sweatshop legislation.

3 WHEREAS, Needed anti-sweatshop legislation has been  
4 reintroduced in the Congress of the United States to prohibit  
5 the import, export or sale of sweatshop goods in the United  
6 States; and

7 WHEREAS, A recent poll showed that 76% of Americans believe  
8 that workers should be protected in the global economy, just as  
9 corporate trademarks and products are protected; and

10 WHEREAS, The Decent Working Conditions and Fair Competition  
11 Act, H.R. 1992 and S. 367, protects the human rights of workers  
12 who endure sweatshop conditions, including filthy and unsafe  
13 workplaces, underage workers, forced overtime, zero benefits and  
14 subminimum wages, in any country; and

15 WHEREAS, Sweatshops abroad, such as those in Honduras, use

1 armed guards to patrol the borders; and

2 WHEREAS, The average age of the Honduran sweatshop laborer is  
3 15, though some are as young as ten; and

4 WHEREAS, Workdays may stretch to 14 hours, six days a week,  
5 in oppressive heat, with only two tightly monitored breaks, if  
6 at all, for water and restroom use; and

7 WHEREAS, In Pakistan, children are often sold into servitude  
8 to owners of factories where they are chained to looms for 15-  
9 hour days making rugs and carpets for export to the United  
10 States; and

11 WHEREAS, At a handbag factory in China, 900 workers were  
12 locked in the walled factory compound for all but a total of 60  
13 minutes a day for meals; and

14 WHEREAS, Guards regularly punched and hit workers for talking  
15 back to managers or even for walking too fast, and they fined  
16 them up to one dollar for infractions such as taking too long in  
17 the restroom; and

18 WHEREAS, The Decent Working Conditions and Fair Competition  
19 Act recognizes core labor standards, including freedom of  
20 association and the freedom to collectively bargain; and

21 WHEREAS, The Decent Working Conditions and Fair Competition  
22 Act declares that businesses have a right to be free from  
23 competition with companies that use sweatshop labor; and

24 WHEREAS, The Decent Working Conditions and Fair Competition  
25 Act enables private plaintiffs, including other retailers, to  
26 sue corporations which have engaged in unfair competition and  
27 deceptive trade practices by manufacturing merchandise in  
28 sweatshops; and

29 WHEREAS, The Decent Working Conditions and Fair Competition  
30 Act further prohibits the import or sale of sweatshop goods

1 within the United States; therefore be it

2 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the  
3 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United  
4 States to pass the Decent Working Conditions and Fair  
5 Competition Act to improve global standards for workers; and be  
6 it further

7 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to  
8 the President of the United States, to the presiding officers of  
9 each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from  
10 Pennsylvania.