

April 22, 2025

Civil Society Groups Alarmed by Cuts to ILAB Grants to Address Forced Labor and Child Labor

The undersigned organizations are alarmed by the U.S. Department of Labor's decision to cancel approximately \$500 million in grants awarded by the Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB). These funds play a vital role in addressing forced labor, child labor, and human trafficking across the globe.

ILAB's grant programs are crucial in the fight against these abuses, supporting efforts to eliminate child labor, prevent exploitation, uphold freedom of association, support trade unions, build capacity and strengthen enforcement mechanisms that combat forced labor worldwide. Their elimination weakens U.S. efforts to eradicate forced labor. This decision undercuts the U.S. government's decades-long commitment to combating human trafficking. More importantly, it strips essential support for those at risk of exploitation, including children, further entrenching cycles of forced labor in supply chains.

We strongly believe that dismantling these programs will not make the U.S. safer, secure, and more prosperous. Instead, these cuts undermine American workers and businesses by allowing unfair competition from goods produced with forced labor. They will also have severe implications for our country's economic security.

We call on the Secretary of Labor to immediately restore ILAB grants and maintain robust staffing at ILAB to ensure that its projects are administered properly and that the office is able to meet its Congressionally mandated responsibilities. This funding is important to create a level playing field for American businesses and workers while fighting human trafficking and forced labor.

Signed,

Above Ground
Action on Smoking and Health
AFL-CIO
Alliance to End Human Trafficking

Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking (ATEST)
American Apparel and Footwear Association
American Federation of Teachers
American Industrial Hygiene Association
Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP)
Azul
Be Slavery Free
Beyond Borders
Campaign to End U.S. Child Labor
Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc (CDM)
Childfund International
Childhood Education International
Child Labor Coalition
China Labor Watch
Child Welfare League of America
Coffee Watch
Colorado Fiscal Institute (CFI)
Common Good Iowa
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Corporate Accountability Lab
Covenant House International
Disability Rights International
Dr. Bronner's
Earth Ethics, Inc.
Economic Policy Institute
Educate the Children Inc.
Fair Labor Association
Fairtrade America
Family Support Center
Fine Cacao and Chocolate Institute
FishWise
First Focus on Children
Florida Policy Institute
Food Empowerment Project
Freedom Network USA
Free the Slaves
Free Uyghur Now
Futures Without Violence
Georgetown University Collaborative on Global Children's Issues
Georgia Budget and Policy Institute
Global Campaign for Education - US
Global March Against Child Labour
Green America

Greenpeace USA
Global Labor Justice
GoodWeave International
HEAL Trafficking
Heartland Initiative
HKM Employment Attorneys LLP
Human Rights First
Human Rights Watch
Human Trafficking Legal Center
Humanity United
Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute
Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility
International Corporate Accountability Roundtable (ICAR)
International Justice Mission
International Rescue Committee
International Rights Advocates
Investor Alliance for Human Rights
Jewish Movement for Uyghur Freedom
Justice At Last
Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor
La Isla Network
Maquila Solidarity Network
Media Voices for Children
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Consumers League
National Council Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA)
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
Occupational Health & Safety Section/APHA
Oceana
Oxfam America
Partners for Dignity and Rights
PCUN, Oregon's Farmworker Union
Polaris
Preble Street
Public Citizen
Responsibility Sourcing Network
Rights CoLab
Santa Clara University - International Human Rights Clinic
Shine Global Inc.
Social Accountability International
Solidarity Center
Sunita Jain Anti-Trafficking Initiative, Loyola Law School
The Centre for Child Rights and Business

The Global March Against Child Labour
Together for Girls
Transparentem
University of Maryland SAFE Center for Human Trafficking Survivors
University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA
Uyghur Human Rights Project
Verité
VOICE Network
Winrock International
Womankind
Worker Rights Consortium
Workplace Justice Lab at Rutgers University
World Vision