

Resources Committee
AY 2006-2007

In 2006-2007, Princeton for Workers' Rights (PWR) asked the University to expand its anti-sweatshop program by joining the Workers' Rights Consortium (WRC) and endorse the WRC's Designated Suppliers' Program (DSP). PWR's request was referred to the Resources Committee.

In its role of providing a forum for continuing review of the University's policies and practices with regard to fair labor standards in the production of licensed products, the Resources Committee issued reports in 2000 and 2004 endorsing Princeton's participation in the Fair Labor Association (FLA) which requires the University to 1) require all of its licensees to adhere to the FLA Code of Conduct and to meet the FLA requirements associated with their licensee category and 2) to disclose publicly the factory locations where licensed products are manufactured. In addition to meeting these FLA requirements, Princeton has played an active leadership role in the organization.

In 2006, PWR recommended that the University continue its relationship with the FLA, and also join the WRC. PWR also recommended that Princeton sign on to the WRC's signature program, the Designated Suppliers' Program.

The Committee held a series of meetings and gathered additional data from WRC, FLA and institutions active in both organizations. Ultimately, PWR's two recommendations were considered separately.

In evaluating the proposal to join the WRC, the Committee considered three core questions: 1) Is there sufficient compatibility between the WRC and FLA such that it is practical to be a member of both or are the two organizations sufficiently at odds that it would not be practical to belong to both? 2) Are the two organizations – WRC and FLA – complementary such that the University would have access to additional services or programs by joining the WRC in addition to the FLA? 3) What are the specific benefits of belonging to each organization?

The Committee believed that despite some recent antipathy, the WRC and FLA have the potential to work together. The Committee recognized that the goals of the two organizations are aligned; the methods of achieving those goals are potentially complementary; and that there is a history between the two groups that includes periods of cooperation. The Committee also believed that there could be unique benefits to belonging to each organization and that the University could have access to additional services, and could have access to and influence on additional manufacturers, by belonging to both the WRC and FLA.

On the first issue, the Resources Committee recommended that the University engage with the WRC and establish a relationship with that organization. The Committee was divided on whether the increased engagement should include joining the organization at this time.

The Committee took no position on the proposal to endorse the WRC's Designated Suppliers' Program (DSP). The Committee strongly recommended postponing this issue until the WRC

working committee on the DSP has completed its review and revision of the DSP proposal and until that proposal is reviewed by the Department of Justice.

The Committee's recommendations were presented to the CPUC and to President Tilghman in November of 2007. The University joined the WRC in the summer of 2008.