May 11, 2017

The Honorable Jaime Herrera Beutler  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations  
1107 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Herrera Beutler:

The undersigned investors have engaged US companies in their portfolios on a range of human rights issues that are a part of the ‘corporate responsibility to respect’ human rights as articulated by the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. A major focus of shareowner engagements with publicly-traded companies is the adoption and implementation of global supply chain policies based on the International Labor Organization’s core labor standards that include forced labor, child labor, non-discrimination, freedom of association and collective bargaining. Sound supply chain management systems lay a foundation for the detection and remediation of workplace human rights abuses that minimize the risk to companies, investors and to workers in supplier facilities throughout the world.

Investors and companies have relied on the programs, resources and expertise of the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) to inform these systems. The Bureau’s efforts to promote the elimination of child labor and forced labor, negotiating and enforcing strong labor provisions in U.S. trade agreements, and engaging U.S. trading partners on international labor standard compliance benefit companies that are implementing human rights due diligence effectively. Through its grants, ILAB has supported 270 projects in more than 90 countries to combat child labor. The Bureau also publishes a widely-cited annual List of Goods Produced by Child or Forced Labor, which helps investors and companies to identify the high-risk global sectors where human trafficking is occurring. The funding of ILAB’s work is critical to ensuring that companies can meet their responsibility to respect human rights and enforce their supply chain practices.

As you work to complete the Fiscal Year 2018 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, we respectfully ask that you provide at least $91 million in funding, the same funding level as FY2015, for the Bureau. ILAB negotiates and enforces labor commitments with our trading partners, and the Bureau will need an additional $5 million to carry out President Trump’s trade agenda, which includes the reevaluation, renegotiation, and enhanced enforcement of U.S. free trade agreements.

We believe ILAB’s efforts to strengthen international labor standards are playing a critical role in the elimination of child and forced labor. We urge you to provide at least $91 million in funding to ensure ILAB can continue its mission to improve the working conditions and rights of workers around the world.
Sincerely,

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Investor Signatories:

Adrian Dominican Sisters, Portfolio Advisory Board
Congregation of Holy Cross Moreau Province
Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
Congregation of St. Joseph
Dana Investment Advisors
Daughters of Charity, Province of St. Louise
Dignity Health
Diocese of Springfield, IL
Dominican Sisters ~ Grand Rapids (MI)
Dominican Sisters of Amityville
Dominican Sisters of Springfield, IL
Dominicans of Sinsinawa Shareholder Committee
Franciscan Sisters of Allegany NY
Maryknoll Sisters
Mercy Health
Mercy Investment Services
NorthStar Asset Management, Inc.

Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment
Priests of the Sacred Heart, US Province
Responsible Sourcing Network
School Sisters of Notre Dame - Central Pacific Province CR Committee
School Sisters of St. Francis
Seventh Generation Interfaith Inc.
Sinsinawa Shareholder Action Committee
Sisters of Bon Secours USA
Sisters of Charity, Halifax
Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, PA
Sisters of St. Dominic of Caldwell NJ
Sisters of the Good Shepherd
Sisters of the Presentation of the BVM
Trinity Health
Tri-State Coalition for Responsible Investment
United Methodist Church Foundation