

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2009-1101

TITLE: **Resolution Urging UF and Aramark To Take Action Against Human Trafficking**

AUTHORS: **Senators Megan Vu, Leeann Bright, Chelsey Campbell, Katherine Getty, Naadira Renfroe, Dave Schneider, and Gaby Alvarez; and Richard Blake**

SPONSORS: **Senators Megan Vu, Naadira Renfroe, Chelsey Campbell, Katherine Getty, Dave Schneider, Gaby Alvarez and Leeann Bright**

WHEREAS, in July 2009, the University of Florida renewed a 10-year contract with the food service corporation Aramark, which in 2006-2007 was worth an estimated \$24 million; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida receives a 10.4% commission on all food sales through Aramark, which in 2006-2007 was worth approximately \$2.5 million; and,

WHEREAS, all University of Florida students, through their tuition, pay fees that fund this multimillion-dollar food service contract between UF and the Aramark corporation; and,

WHEREAS, all food service available on campus is contracted through the Aramark corporation, including the on-campus dining facilities at which students use their meal plans; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida is Aramark's largest account, followed by the University of Central Florida, the University of South Florida, and the Florida State University, respectively; and

WHEREAS, being a flagship university in the state of Florida, as well as the fifth largest university in the nation, the University of Florida and the precedents that it sets are regarded as examples for other educational institutions; and

WHEREAS, Aramark is a major consumer of goods supplied by W&D Apparel, a Taiwan-based manufacturing firm conducting operations in Jordan; and,

WHEREAS, W&D Apparel operates in the Jordanian Qualifying Industrial Zone, which has been highlighted in the 2008 Trafficking in Persons Report issued by the U.S. State Department for engaging in worker abuse and forced labor; and,

WHEREAS, since September 2007, W&D Apparel has recruited hundreds of workers from Vietnam and subjected them to human rights abuses such as 16-hour workdays, misrepresented wage compensation, confiscation of workers' passports, and severe beatings and maltreatment by both W&D staff and local authorities; and,

WHEREAS, W&D Apparel is continuing to practice a policy of human trafficking and labor exploitation between Vietnam and Jordan while distributing its products from this facility to major US corporations, including Aramark; and,

WHEREAS, according to the UF mission statement, the University of Florida “aspires to further state, national and international achievements in support of human values and improving the quality of life;” and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida must promote these ideals in every aspect of its daily operations by holding accountable business partners, such as Aramark, to this vision; and,

WHEREAS, University of Florida students oppose Aramark’s association with corporations that engage in labor exploitation and human trafficking, and are joined in opposition by campuses across the nation, including Georgetown University and the University of Texas at Austin; and organizations, including Vietnamese-American non-profit Boat People SOS; then,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate urges university officials to pressure Aramark to advocate that W&D Apparel end their immoral business practices to remain true to the University of Florida’s mission of supporting local and global “human values” and “quality of life;” and,

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate urges university officials to pressure Aramark to ensure W&D Apparel releases all forced laborers and properly compensates its workers; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate will continue to pursue action to eliminate these immoral business practices if this resolution does not produce action from university officials within a two-week time period of this resolution’s adoption.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution will be sent to the Board of Trustees; the Office of the President of the University of Florida; Reitz Union Board of Managers; the Reitz Union Food Service Committee; the University of Florida Food Service Advisory Committee; the University of Florida Business Services Division; the University of Florida Aramark Corporate Office; and Thomas Vozzo, Executive Vice President, ARAMARK Corporation and President, ARAMARK Uniform and Career Apparel.