

## Wal-Mart: 'From Whom Much is Expected'

As people of faith, we believe that Wal-Mart should be a good employer and a good neighbor. All of our faith traditions – Christian, Jewish, Muslim – have statements urging employers to pay wages that can support families, provide benefits for families, ensure that workers are treated with respect and dignity on the job, guarantee workers' right to organize, and challenge sweatshops at home and abroad.

In our traditions, "to whom much is given, much is expected." As the largest employer in the nation, Wal-Mart establishes the national standards for work. We call upon Wal-Mart to establish:

- **Family wages:** Work compensation must be measured not only as reimbursement for individuals, but as a means to allow workers to raise their families in dignity.
- **Family health care:** Too many Wal-Mart workers do not qualify for health care or cannot afford it.
- **Respect and dignity on the job:** Workers are not just employees, they are human beings created in the image of God and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.
- **Right to organize:** All major faith traditions support the rights of workers to organize into unions and associations of their choice, without harassment and interference.
- **Challenging sweatshops:** As one of the largest worldwide purchasers of products, Wal-Mart must become a leader in fighting sweatshop and child labor around the world.

Wal-Mart is not an ordinary company. It is a trendsetter. It is a pioneer. We call upon Wal-Mart to become an ethical leader, paving the way for family wages and benefits, good jobs, and challenging sweatshops. Wal-Mart has been given much. Much is expected!

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## What People of Faith Can Do

People of faith are concerned about the standards Wal-Mart is setting for the nation and often ask, "What can I do?" Below are five concrete things you and your congregation can do:

1. **Organize a group in your home or congregation** to watch the Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Prices movie. To order a copy of the DVD, visit [www.walmartmovie.com](http://www.walmartmovie.com).
2. **Lead a small delegation of religious and community leaders** to meet with the manager of your local Wal-Mart. Ask the manager about the wages and benefits paid in the store. If you get the information, you can compare the answer with what it takes to raise a family in your community. Just asking the question demonstrates community concern about these core issues and will surely be conveyed to the regional and national management.
3. **Publicly choose Costco for your congregation's bulk purchases.** If the congregation has a Sam's Club membership (the bulk purchasing club owned by Wal-Mart), switch from Sam's Club to Costco. Costco pays significantly higher wages and health care benefits and allows workers the right to organize. If your congregation intentionally chooses Costco, please:
  - Inform Interfaith Worker Justice so it can publicize your choice.
  - Send a letter to both Costco and Sam's Club explaining your choice.
  - Send a press release about your congregation's choice to area newspapers and your denomination's publications.
4. **Participate in campaigns seeking community benefit agreements.** Whenever Wal-Mart wants to open a new store, it is an opportunity to get commitments from the company about wages, benefits, and working conditions.
5. **Support city and state legislation** that requires higher standards for large employers such as Wal-Mart.

For sample letters and press releases, visit [www.iwj.org](http://www.iwj.org). For information on community benefit agreements and community standards legislation, visit [walmartwatch.com](http://walmartwatch.com) or [www.wakeupwalmart.com](http://www.wakeupwalmart.com).