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Congress of the United States
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CHAIRMAN,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC POLICY

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND
GOVERNMENT REFORM

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

October 29, 2009

Mr. Claus-Dietrich Lahrs
Chairman of Managing Board
HUGO BOSS AG
Dieselstrasse 12
72555 Metzingen, Germany

Dear Mr. Lahrs,

I strongly oppose any effort to close the Hugo Boss production plant in Brooklyn, Ohio, or to ask the workers, many of whom have spent decades working at the facility, to take an unreasonable and unwarranted 35% pay cut to maintain or increase executive salaries and profits.

As you know, the suit production plant in Brooklyn, which the company bought in 1995, provides hundreds of jobs for residents of the local area and to the State of Ohio. The loss of jobs as a result of failed wage negotiations with the Workers United Local 168-C union or as a result of the factory closing to outsource operations overseas has significant ramifications for the workers and their families. I have been notified that as of this week, over ten workers have already lost their jobs and that the company is threatening unionized workers to take significant cuts to their wages and hours or have their jobs terminated.

While I understand that the decision to close the plant is not final, there are indications that Hugo Boss is taking steps to fully close the factory. According to Workers United leadership, they have been notified by representatives of your company that their contract will not be renewed when it expires in April 2010. Short-term financial gains should not be placed ahead of workers who have spent a significant part of their careers at the factory.

It is especially troubling that the CEO of Hugo Boss USA has purchased a condominium in New York for \$3.2 million while hundreds of Hugo Boss employees in Ohio face increasing job uncertainty.

Hugo Boss has an obligation to its employees, especially those with a long history of work and dedication at the factory. The livelihood of hundreds of Ohio's 10th Congressional District residents are at stake by decision you choose to make. I urge you to negotiate in good faith with members of the union representing your employees to maintain the factory and jobs in Brooklyn, Ohio.

Sincerely,

Dennis J. Kucinich
Member of Congress