

Coalition for a Better Inglewood

April 5, 2005

Mr. Lee Scott
CEO
Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
Bentonville, Arkansas
72716-8611

Dear Mr. Scott:

One year ago, Wal-Mart tried to deny the people of Inglewood their rights with a ballot initiative that would have allowed your company to build a supercenter with no public review, input or oversight.

As you know, the voters of Inglewood rejected Wal-Mart's initiative by a two-to-one margin. We rejected it because your company acted with disrespect for the basic rights of our community. And we rejected it because the people of Inglewood – like people across America -- have serious concerns about Wal-Mart's impact on communities.

We are concerned about the impact of poverty wages and inadequate health care on the quality of life of Inglewood families.

We are concerned about maintaining business opportunities for small businesses and Wal-Mart's track record of driving locally owned and minority businesses out of business.

We are concerned about the unmitigated negative impacts, including increased crime, traffic, noise, and pollution, which result from the development of Wal-Mart projects.

We challenge you to work with communities to address these concerns and agree to mitigate the negative impacts that have resulted from the development of Wal-Mart stores throughout the country.

In the past 12 months, Wal-Mart has spent tens of millions of dollars on a public relations campaign that has attempted to project a positive image of Wal-Mart's relationship with communities.

We believe that it's time for Wal-Mart to focus less on image and more on substance.

We believe that the hundreds of millions of dollars your company is investing in public relations would be far better spent on addressing the problems that have damaged America's communities.

In the coming weeks, Wal-Mart is expected to announce new plans to build a store in Inglewood, on land that your company quietly purchased after last year's election.

Inglewood needs development, but it must be development that makes our community stronger, not weaker.

Therefore we propose that your company negotiate and sign a Community Benefits Agreement that will make the project work for the people of Inglewood.

This legally binding agreement will protect the rights of our community. It will guarantee living wage jobs, affordable family health care, fair pension benefits, job training and advancement, freedom from retaliation and basic rights on the job. It will also protect the interests of small businesses, and ensure that your project does not increase crime, traffic, noise and pollution in our city.

Many private developers, including some of the largest in the world, have signed Community Benefits Agreements with similar provisions.

Inglewood deserves nothing less.

The people of Inglewood want what every community in America wants: good jobs with affordable health care and fair pension benefits, a diverse mix of small and large businesses with quality products and services, safe neighborhoods and a clean environment.

Mr. Scott, you've admitted publicly that Wal-Mart made a mistake in Inglewood. Now you have an opportunity to correct that mistake by showing the people of Inglewood – and the American public – that Wal-Mart is truly committed to strong, healthy communities.

We challenge you to commit yourself through actions, not words.

ENDORSEMENTS (Partial List)

Elected Officials

Jerome E. Horton,
51st Assembly District, California
Eloy Morales, *Inglewood City Council*
Curren Price, *Inglewood City Council*
Ralph Franklin, *Inglewood City Council*

Clergy

Rev. Dr. James M. Lawson,
*President, Los Angeles Southern Christian
Leadership Conference*
Minister Tony Muhammad,
Western Region Director, Nation of Islam
Rev. Lafayette Funches,
Grace and Truth Evangelical Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. Harold E. Kidd,
First Presbyterian Church of Inglewood
Rev. Altagracia Perez,
Holy Faith Episcopal Church
Rev. Palmer Don Palmer
Rev. William Smart
District Elder Rev. Norman Copeland,
AME Churches
Rev. William Jarvis Johnson
Calvary CME Church
Christ Liberty Tabernacle Church

Community-Based Organizations and Advocates

Inglewood Coalition for Drug and Violence Prevention
Inglewood Democratic Club
Community Coalition
Coalition L.A.
Neighbor to Neighbor Action Fund
Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy
Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice
Maria Elena Chavez
Doug Appel
Khalilah Durias
Danny K. Tabor
Brent Tilley (Inglewood Teacher)
Paulette Francis (Inglewood Teacher)

Local Businesses & Workers

Gil Matthieu (Small Business Owner)
Carlos Reveles (Small Business Owner)
James Harris (Property Owner)

Aminah Muhammad (Small Business
Owner)
Gloria Rodriguez (Grocery Worker)
Juanita Ducros (Retired Grocery Worker)
Margaret Niles (Grocery Worker)
Gary Cowley (Small Business Owner)
Sylvia Hopper (Grocery Worker)
Elionai Padilla (Grocery Worker)
UFCW Local 770
UNITE HERE Local 11

Residents

Gerald Thompson
Cedric Barnes
Francis Mayfield
Lonjiel Howard
Mary L. Green
Raymond B. Banks
Joyce Young
Claudia Matthews
Ramon Mentor
Henry Harris
Arthur Jordean Sparling
Saundra Sparling, Ph.D.
Elder Ruth Hiersemann
Ms. Annie Burns
Christine Carter
Dorothy Miller
Robert Miller
Thalia Clarke
Dianne Lafrank
Frances Apodaca
Henry Brown
Raena Banks-Neal
Deborah Banks
Ava Petty
Irene Cowley
Twain Wilson
Jim DeMaegt
Deacon Alexander
Cleveland Brown
Emantha Moore
Saundra Foster
Ramon Mentor
Lacheta Clarke
Deborah Gordon
Delia Council
Elliott Petty