

RESOLVED:

Levi Strauss & Company pledged to work with humility and transparency to deliver meaningful progress. We urge the board, in order to fulfill this commitment with regard to the company's animal welfare policy, to commission a report on the slaughter methods used to procure leather to determine whether they conform to this policy. The report should also address the risks presented by any incompatible sourcing and the company's plans, if any, to mitigate these risks.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT:

Levi Strauss & Company's animal welfare policy states that its suppliers are "expected to adhere to the internationally recognized industry best practices outlined by animal-welfare experts in support of the Five Domains of Animal Welfare: nutrition, physical environment, health, behavior and mental state." The fifth domain, mental state, is defined as ensuring conditions and treatment that avoid mental suffering.

Levi Strauss & Company encourages sourcing from Leather Working Group-certified tanneries and is "committed to only using leather and animal skins from sources that are responsibly managed to protect biodiversity and prevent deforestation." But this doesn't address animal welfare and, like the animal welfare policy, is merely aspirational.

In the interests of traceability, our company's 2020 Sustainability Report includes an interactive map of supplier factories and mills. While these suppliers include manufacturers of leather goods, they do not include slaughterhouses, where animal welfare is of greatest concern. The Sustainability Report also fails to specify the slaughterhouse management and methods, and our company provides no evidence that it procures its leather from cattle who have freedom from fear and distress, as "expected" by the company.

Studies in animal sciences provide physiological evidence of elevated stress prior to and during slaughter through examination of muscle tissue, liver, adrenal gland, and urine samples. These studies document the causes of stress, including exposure to the elements during transport; deprivation of food and water during transport; tripping, falling, and bruising at poorly conditioned slaughterhouses; and improper or repeated stunning prior to slaughter, which is the most frequent cause of U.S. governmental enforcement actions.

Animals in the international leather industry are commonly transported long distances across national borders and international waters. Issues such as the pandemic have forced animals to endure even longer journeys and prolonged suffering. Animals are subject to disease, injury, and heat stress, during which they can literally cook from the inside, resulting in a mortality rate that can exceed 2%. Those who survive transport may be bludgeoned with a sledgehammer, stabbed in the throat while still conscious, or slaughtered via inept and protracted throat-slitting by unskilled workers wielding dull knives and finally even skinned alive.

Consumers around the world are prioritizing animal welfare and increasingly seeking vegan alternatives to leather because of its inherent cruelty and negative environmental impact. Our shareholders deserve transparency when it comes to leather sourcing and should have the opportunity to evaluate Levi Strauss & Company's continued investment in this material.

Accordingly, we urge all shareholders to support this ethically and economically responsible resolution.