



THE HARRY POTTER ALLIANCE

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Luna Lovegood Actress Joins Fans and Labor Rights Advocates in Calling on Warner Bros. to Make all Harry Potter Chocolate Fair Trade

Boston, MA and Washington, DC – With the final film in the Harry Potter franchise set for release this week, the Harry Potter Alliance (HPA) is joining forces with the International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF) to call on Warner Brothers to take a step to stop child labor, forced labor and trafficking in the cocoa industry by making all Harry Potter chocolate Fair Trade Certified. Recently Harry Potter film star **Evanna Lynch** (Luna Lovegood) joined **over 15,000 fans** in calling on Warner Bros. to ensure that Harry Potter chocolate is not made by children under abusive conditions.

“As an actor in the Harry Potter films and as a lifelong fan of the Harry Potter series, it would give me great satisfaction to know that chocolate sold in Harry’s name is consistent with the values in Harry Potter,” said **Evanna Lynch**. “Further, we all want Harry Potter chocolate, and chocolate in general, to have a future. If we do not act in a way that is moral toward cocoa farmers now by ensuring that chocolate is fair trade, we will all pay a price in the future.”

When initially contacted by HPA regarding concerns about child labor in Harry Potter chocolate products, **Warner Bros. CEO Barry Meyer** responded that “we applaud your commitment to social responsibility and support those in need” and “we welcome any specific information you have that would be contrary to our ethical sourcing activities.” HPA then presented Warner Brothers with evidence of the ongoing use of child labor, forced labor and trafficking in West Africa’s cocoa sector. Additionally, HPA provided Warner Brothers with an assessment of its chocolate suppliers’ labor rights policies from Free2Work.org (a collaboration between the International Labor Rights Forum and the Not for Sale Campaign) in which it received a failing grade. To date, however, Warner Brothers has not made any public commitments to take stronger action to stop these abuses in Harry Potter chocolate.

“While Warner Brothers’ ethical sourcing guidelines prohibit the kinds of abuses prevalent in the cocoa industry, the company has not taken appropriate steps to ensure that its Harry Potter chocolate is made responsibly,” says **Andrew Slack of the Harry Potter Alliance**. “The cocoa industry’s connection to child labor is in direct contradiction to these guidelines, to the morals and messages within Harry Potter and the Harry Potter brand. We believe that our campaign presents a win-win for everyone. The Harry Potter Alliance has brought together a rapidly growing number of fans eager to buy Harry Potter chocolate should it fall under the Fair Trade label.”

“Warner Brothers can be a leader in doing the right thing for cocoa farmers globally and it doesn’t require magical powers like those that Harry Potter possesses,” **Judy Gearhart, Executive Director of the International Labor Rights Forum** added. “Warner Brothers can use the launch of the new Harry Potter film as an opportunity to commit to Fair Trade cocoa and help make its chocolate treats enjoyable both for fans and for children in cocoa growing communities.”

“Like any well-run business, Warner Bros. should listen closely to its target audience,” said **Simon Billenness, a corporate responsibility consultant and advisor to the Harry Potter Alliance**.

“The fans of Harry Potter have alerted Warner Bros. of the risk to the company’s reputation and business from any association with child labor in the cocoa industry. Moreover, the Harry Potter Alliance has proposed a workable solution: sourcing Fair Trade Certified chocolate.”

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The HP Alliance (www.thehpalliance.org) is a 501c3 nonprofit that uses parallels from Harry Potter to inspire hundreds of thousands of Harry Potter fans to act as heroes in our world. To date, the HPA has sent **five cargo planes to Haiti**, donated over **88,000 books** across the world, made profound strides for the anti-genocide, LGBTQ, and media reform movements. With a staff of over 50 volunteers, 85 chapters, and with the Internet/social media as “it’s turf” the HPA won the \$250,000 **first place in the Chase Bank Community Giving Contest**.

Covered by many major publications and **praised by JK Rowling** in the **Time Magazine** article that named her “Runner up to Person of the Year,” the HPA has been named the **premier model of civic engagement** for the twenty-first century by USC’s Provost Professor Henry Jenkins in a MacArthur funded study on participatory culture and civic engagement. The HPA is currently expanding it’s model of “cultural acupuncture” as it brings together over 20 fan communities of blockbuster books, television shows, and movies, the world’s most prominent YouTube celebrities and New York Times best selling authors in an unprecedented network that takes a bottom up approach to harnessing the energy of popular culture, modern myth, and social media for social change.

The International Labor Rights Forum (www.LaborRights.org) is an advocacy organization dedicated to achieving just and humane treatment for workers worldwide.