



## About Big Box Stores

Big Box Stores may have at one time felt like the right answer to our tax and employment issues, this is not the case today.

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### GLUT OF CHAIN STORES - MANY ARE NOW EMPTY

- Vacancy rates at strip malls are at a 12-year high and many Big Box stores are abandoning locations.
- The International Council of Shopping Centers has forecasted the closing of 6,500 chain store closures this year. Many top retailers are closing stores, in fact in two new stores, Lisbon Linens & Things and Old Navy. are now closed.

### SLIM OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORKERS

- Between 1977 and 2002, Wal-Mart opened 2,000 stores and for every new retail job created by Wal-Mart, 1.4 were lost.
- Not much hope for advancement – the odds of landing a management job are incredibly slim. Majority of store managers start as hourly workers – then only about 1 in 350 land a management job. Consolidation has given Big Box stores the power to keep down wages and squeeze out the middle class.
- Large numbers of Wal-Mart, Home Depot and Target employees, unable to make ends meet, have enrolled in Medicaid and for public assistance.<sup>1i</sup>
- In fact, in the State of CT, Wal-Mart is the number one employer with the highest number of employees receiving tax payer paid health-care.

### PRICE SQUEEZING IMPACTS PRODUCT QUALITY

- In 2000, Connecticut Attorney General Blumenthal and Environmental Protection Commissioner Rocque Jr. filed a lawsuit against Wal-Mart Stores Inc. for environmental violations related to management of storm water at 11 stores in Connecticut.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2005, Wal-Mart agreed to pay \$1.5 million in penalties in CT for storm water violation.
- Products found tainted with lead and other toxins suggests that manufacturers, many of which make special lines solely for Big Box retailers, may have achieved those low prices by cutting corners.

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<sup>1</sup> Stacey Mitchell, High Cost of Low Price  
<http://www.startribune.com/opinion/commentary/25631274.html?page=1&c=y>

<sup>2</sup> Wal-Mart Watch. [www.watmartwatch.com](http://www.watmartwatch.com)

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