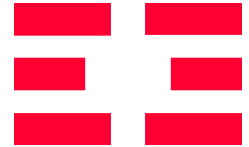


Akerman

Locations: Florida (HQ)
Industries: Legal

RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

DESCRIPTION:

Akerman is High Risk. The company yields to political activism in shaping corporate governance, potentially alienating consumers, dividing employees, and harming shareholders. The company implements race and identity-based policies that replace merit, excellence, and integrity with preferential treatment and outcomes. Akerman embraces corporate initiatives that redirect its central focus from business goals to partisan policies and divisive issues. This approach fails to safeguard free exercise, free speech, and free enterprise.

Corporate Weaponization

Has canceled customers, suppliers, or vendors due to their political views or religious beliefs OR corporately boycotts, divests, or sanctions regions, people groups, or industries. Medium Risk

Akerman received a score of 95 on the 2023 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a political stakeholder group. The company recruits employees based on sexual identity issues. The company discriminates against vendors that do not promote divisive sex and gender policies, indicating it prioritizes sexual issues over merit (1)(2). However, the company has not publicly canceled customers, suppliers, or vendors based on political views or religious beliefs.

Charitable giving (including employee matching programs) policies or practices discriminate against charitable organizations based on views or religious beliefs. High Risk

Akerman's HRC 2023-2024 CEI rating indicates the company will not donate to non-religious charities unless they embrace controversial sexual identity policies (1)(2). Akerman does not appear to discriminate against charitable organizations based on views or beliefs (3).

Employment policies fail to protect against viewpoint or other discrimination and/or are ideological in nature. High Risk

Akerman's HRC 2023-2024 CEI rating indicates the company provides gender transition guidelines for its employees and a specific benefits guide with a comprehensive explanation of transgender services funded by the company (1)(2). Akerman does not publish a nondiscrimination policy (3).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

Uses corporate reputation to support causes, organizations, or policies hostile to freedom of expression. High Risk

Akerman's HRC 2023-2024 CEI rating indicates the company agrees to allow a controversial stakeholder group focused on sexual identity issues to dictate marketing or advertising strategy (1)(2). By doing so, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. Akerman has a Racial Justice Initiative (ARJI) that "involves significant pro bono participation, education, community outreach, activism, and financial support" (3). The company was ranked among the top 10 law firms in Law360's Diversity Snapshot in 2022 and earned the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity's Top Performer Honor (4)(5).

Uses corporate funds to advance ideological causes, organizations, or policies hostile to freedom of expression. High Risk

Akerman's HRC 2023-2024 CEI rating indicates the company covers transgender related costs for its employees and their children, including paid short-term leave, puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, chest surgeries, genital surgeries, medical visits and lab monitoring, travel and lodging. Additionally, the company has pledged philanthropic support of at least one organization or event that promotes sex and gender ideology (1)(2). By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company increases health care costs and risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. The company partners with several racial justice organizations and supports them financially (3). Akerman is a sponsor of the American Bar Association's Judicial Intern Opportunity Program "to provide intern opportunities to students who are members of racial, ethnic, LGBT, and other groups that are traditionally underrepresented in the legal profession" (4). The company signed Orlando Economic Partnership's DEI pledge, committing themselves to fight systemic racism, prioritize the success of diverse people in its workplace, and ensure DEI "is a strategic imperative with demonstrated commitment and actions" (5).

Uses corporate political actions and/or financial contributions for ideological, non-business purposes. High Risk

Akerman's HRC 2023-2024 CEI rating indicates the company publicly advocated for controversial sex and gender ideology through local, state or federal legislation or initiatives (1)(2). By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. Akerman has not used its PAC donations for ideological purposes but has lobbied for the "College for All Act" (3)(4)(5). The firm is a part of the Law Firm Antiracism Alliance, committed to work on initiatives that fight "systemic racism" (6)(7).

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