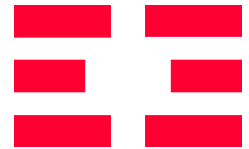




Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld

Locations: Washington D.C. (HQ)
Industries: Legal

RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

DESCRIPTION:

Akin 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. Akin 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

Akin's HRC 2023 CEI rating indicates 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). Akin integrates ESG into all of its business practices. It "was one of the first law firms with a dedicated ESG focus" (3)(4). 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

Akin'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). Akin does not publish charitable giving guidelines (3).

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

Akin's HRC 2023-2024 CEI rating indicates the company forces employees to attend multiple, controversial trainings on gender identity, sexual orientation, transgender issues, and divisive racial ideology. 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). Akin is Mansfield Certified, indicating its support of DEI in its recruitment, hiring, promotions, and leadership composition (3)(4). The firm is a member of The Diversity and Flexibility Alliance, indicating its support of DEI in its recruitment, retention, promotions, and leadership composition (5)(6). Akin does not publish a nondiscrimination policy (7).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

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

Akin'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. Akin has a podcast called Accelerate ESG which "features Akin lawyers and advisors, as well as outside professionals, discussing business critical ESG issues impacting organizations around the globe" (3). The company supports DEI within its business practices. It employs a chief diversity, equity, and inclusion officer and its DEI Council "received the 2021 Diversity Team Award from Diversity Journal" (4).

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

Akin provides a benefits package for employees which covers travel/lodging costs for an abortion and transgender medical procedures for covered employees and dependents, including children (1)(2)(3). The firm'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 (4)(5). 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 "has committed to select at least one Equal Justice Works fellow per year, for two-year fellowships" (6). Akin is a member of the MCCA, indicating its focus on recruiting, retaining, and promoting employees based on race (7)(8).

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

Akin'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. Akin has a pro bono partnership with the HRC to repeal legislation intended to protect parental rights, girls' sports, bathroom facilities, and gendered spaces (3)(4). Akin is a part of the Law Firm Antiracism Alliance, committed to work on initiatives that fight "systemic racism" (5)(6). The company has not used its PAC donations for ideological purposes and has not reported on its lobbying (7)(8)(9).

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