



Berkshire Bank

Subsidiaries: Berkshire Hills Bancorp

Locations: Massachusetts (HQ)

Industries: Banks

RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

DESCRIPTION:

Berkshire Bank scored a 90 on the 2023 Corporate Equality Index (CEI) from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a political stakeholder group. By complying with the HRC's controversial demands, Berkshire Bank increases the risk of dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. The company covers transgender-related medical costs for its employees and their children. It also uses sex and gender ideology criteria in employee recruitment, vendor selection, marketing, and philanthropic support. Berkshire is a signatory of the Principles for Responsible Investment, incorporating ESG issues into investment analysis, decision-making, and other business practices. The company forces employees to undergo multiple ideological trainings and uses its reputation, corporate funds, and political influence to support controversial sex and gender ideologies, organizations, and legislation. Berkshire Bank opposed various state and local legislation intended to protect parental rights, girls' sports, bathroom facilities, and gendered spaces. The company supports the Equality Act and was part of the Freedom for All Americans coalition, which advocated for federal legislation that would overrule state laws designed to protect girls' sports and similar laws. For these reasons, Berkshire Bank earns a High Risk rating.

Corporate Weaponization

Has denied service to 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**

Berkshire Bank received a score of 90 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)(23)(4). However, the company has not publicly terminated business relationships due to religious beliefs or political views.

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

Berkshire Bank's HRC CEI rating indicates the company will not donate to non-religious charities unless they embrace controversial sexual identity policies (1)(2). The company restricts its giving to small businesses, financial development, and providing safe housing (3).

Employment policies fail to protect against discrimination based on political affiliation/views and/or religion. **High Risk**

Berkshire Bank's HRC 2023 CEI rating indicates the company forces employees to attend multiple, controversial trainings on gender identity, sexual orientation, transgender issues, and divisive racial ideology(1)(2). The company does not provide viewpoint protections

for its employees (3)

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

Uses corporate reputation to support ideological causes and/or organizations hostile to freedom of expression. High Risk

Berkshire Bank's HRC 2023 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. Berkshire Bank opposed the Florida Parental Rights in Education Act, which would prohibit teaching gender identity and sexual orientation to kids in K-3rd grade (3). It signed an open letter in support of the Equality Act (4). Berkshire Bank was part of the Freedom for All Americans coalition, which advocated for federal legislation that would overrule state laws designed to protect girls' sports and similar laws (56).

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

Berkshire Bank's HRC 2023 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.

Uses corporate political contributions for ideological, non-business purposes. High Risk

Berkshire Bank's HRC 2023 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. The company does not operate a PAC or engage in lobbying at this time (3)(4)(5).

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