



Costco Wholesale

Locations: Washington (HQ)

Industries: Food and Staples Retailing, Retailing

RISK LEVEL:



Medium Risk

DESCRIPTION:

Costco is Medium Risk. The company often 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. Costco occasionally embraces corporate initiatives that redirect its central focus from business goals to partisan policies and divisive issues at times. 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

Costco received a score of 25 on the 2025 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 [\(1\)\(2\)](#). Costco integrates ESG into its business practices. From its 2024 proxy report: "\$93,333 of bonus eligibility [for the CEO] was determined by environmental and social objectives for achievement of quantitative performance metrics (including metrics concerning diversity, equity and inclusion, resource consumption, and other environmental-related areas)" [\(3\)\(4\)](#). However, Costco has not canceled customers, suppliers, or vendors based on political views or religious beliefs [\(5\)](#).

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

Costco's donation program is specifically directed at nonprofits that focus on kids, education, or health and human services. Eligible organizations must also be in the same neighborhood as a Costco store. Costco does not make any donations outside of this, including to "religious organizations for religious purposes" [\(1\)](#). Costco likely uses Benevity as its charitable giving platform. Benevity vets charities according to the Southern Poverty Law Center's Hate List, which includes mainstream libertarian, conservative, family, and religious advocacy organizations [\(2\)\(3\)\(4\)](#).

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

[1](#)). Costco protects its employees against viewpoint discrimination [\(2\)](#).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

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

Costco has not supported ideological causes or policies [\(1\)](#).

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

Costco has not used corporate funds to advance ideological causes, organizations, or policies [\(1\)](#).

Uses corporate political actions and/or financial contributions for ideological, non-business purposes. **N/A**

Costco does not operate a PAC or report on its lobbying at this time [\(1\)](#)[\(2\)](#)[\(3\)](#).

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