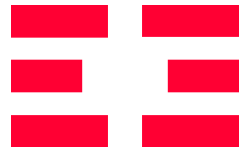




Kroger

Subsidiaries: Harris Teeter, Fred Meyer, Vitacost, King Soopers, City Market, Fry's, Gerbes, Ralphs, Home Chef
Locations: Ohio (HQ)
Industries: Food and Staples Retailing

RISK LEVEL:



High Risk

DESCRIPTION:

Kroger fired two Christian employees who requested not to wear the gay pride logo on their work aprons. Kroger scored an 85 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, Kroger 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. Kroger uses its reputation, corporate funds, and political influence to support controversial sex and gender ideologies, organizations, and legislation. The company 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. Kroger does not provide its employees with protections against viewpoint discrimination. Kroger pledged \$13 million to BLM and related causes and provides a benefits package for employees which covers travel/lodging costs for an abortion. Kroger uses its reputation and corporate dollars to fund LGBT causes and organizations. For these reasons, Kroger receives 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. **High Risk**

Kroger fired two Christian employees who opted not to wear the rainbow logo emblematic of LGBTQ pride (1). Kroger received a score of 85 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(2)(3).

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

Kroger's HRC CEI rating indicates the company will not donate to non-religious charities unless they embrace controversial sexual identity policies (1)(2)(3). Harris Teeter will not donate to political or religious organizations on the basis that the company cannot "fund drives conducted by religious or political organizations" (4).

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

Kroger does not provide viewpoint protections for its employees (1).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

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

The company has advocated for the Equality Act and told employees to do the same (1). Kroger has encouraged employees to support the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (2). Kroger partners with the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (3). Harris Teeter and Kroger partner with the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (45)(6). By doing so, the company risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders.

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

Kroger 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)(4). Kroger'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 (5)(6). By allowing a political stakeholder group to dictate operations, the company increases health care costs and risks dividing employees, alienating customers and harming shareholders. Kroger funds the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce and enables community donations to Planned Parenthood (7)(8). Kroger pledged \$13 million to the Black Lives Matter movement and related causes (9)(10)(11). Harris Teeter's supplier-driven Pride collection included an offering of limited-edition Vizzy hard seltzer produced in partnership with the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) (12).

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

Kroger'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 (3)(4).

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