

KENNETH COLE

Kenneth Cole

Locations: New York (HQ)

Industries: Consumer Durables and Apparel

RISK LEVEL:



Medium Risk

DESCRIPTION:

Kenneth Cole 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. Kenneth Cole 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

Kenneth Cole received a score of 30 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). However, Kenneth Cole has not publicly canceled customers, suppliers, or vendors based on political views or religious beliefs (3).

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

Kenneth Cole's HRC 2025 CEI rating indicates the company will not donate to non-religious charities unless they embrace controversial sexual identity policies (1)(2). The company does not appear to discriminate against religious organizations based on views or beliefs. Kenneth Cole has largely focused its giving on AIDs research and addressing health issues, including mental health (3)(4)(5).

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

Kenneth Cole does not publish a nondiscrimination policy (1).

Corporate Governance and Public Policy

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

High Risk

Kenneth Cole signed an open letter endorsing the Equality Act, a contentious proposal to amend the 1964 Civil Rights Act by adding sexual orientation and so-called gender identity as protected categories. The legislation would, among other implications, grant biological men access to women-only spaces such as sports teams and public restrooms, and compel healthcare providers to deliver sex-denying healthcare (1). The company also celebrated Pride Month by releasing an exclusive collection with Little Words Project (2).

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

Medium Risk

Kenneth Cole partnered with Zynga to launch a 2021 Pride Collection in its mobile game "High Heels!" (1). Otherwise, there are no publicly known cases of Kenneth Cole using corporate funds to advance ideological causes, organizations, or policies (2)(3).

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

N/A

Kenneth Cole does not operate a PAC or engage in lobbying at this time (1)(2)(3).

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