

Aetna Shareholder Meeting
Statement in Opposition of Proposal #5
Justin Danhof, Esq., General Counsel and Free Enterprise Project Director
The National Center for Public Policy Research, May 20, 2016

I'm Justin Danhof of the National Center for Public Policy Research, and I rise to oppose Proposal #5.

The proposal is a sham and the proponent is a fraud. New York's Comptroller purports to use the New York State and Local Retirement System as a conduit for transparency and good governance. That's not true.

The NY Comptroller is part of a broad network of liberal organizations that use corporate America as a pawn to try to silence speech and defund the free enterprise movement. This network files dozens of resolutions annually complaining about a lack of transparency and accountability regarding corporate lobbying and political activity. However, these groups never – and I mean never – express concern about the billions of corporate dollars that go to fund liberal causes and politicians. And that's the point – the NY Comptroller and its ilk abhor corporate speech when it may skew right, but remain silent when it flows freely to leftist causes.

Today's proposal asks the company to turn over lists, to name names. This is intimidation in its highest form. The proponent complains about a company donation from five years ago to the Chamber of Commerce. For trying to reduce government regulations and red tape so that Aetna may better serve its customers and the health care industry, the NY Comptroller wants to silence the Chamber because it claims the group is controversial. Well what about Aetna's donations to Planned Parenthood – I guess the NY Comptroller doesn't think that's controversial.

This year, the proponent has similar proposals to Coca-Cola, Wynn, Raytheon, Johnson & Johnson, Western Union and Waste Management – just to name a few. Again, they only seek to shame any corporate activity that is right of center. Many of these companies actively support leftists causes and politicians, but the proponent is not interest in those activities.

This proposal has nothing to do with Aetna as a company. And it has even less to do with us Aetna investors. We are just a means to achieve censorship that NY Comptroller cannot otherwise achieve since the U.S. Constitution protects free speech. Don't let the NY Comptroller's office silence free speech. Please join me in rejecting proposal #5.

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