

Amazon Shareholder Meeting - Proposal #12 Statement
Justin Danhof, Esq., General Counsel and Free Enterprise Project Director
National Center for Public Policy Research, May 22, 2019

I'm Justin Danhof of the National Center for Public Policy Research and I move Proposal #12, which seeks to increase diversity on the company's board of directors.

Across corporate America, company after company is adopting board diversity policies based on race and gender. These procedures have the stated goal of reducing corporate groupthink and require companies to interview an underrepresented minority and a woman for each open board spot. This isn't diversity. It's racism and sexism. Not all women think alike based on the fact that they are women. Similarly, not all Asian or Latino or black Americans think the same based on their respective skin color.

At last year's annual meeting, Amazon adopted just such a policy. Following this surprising development, I asked Mr. Bezos if the company's leadership also valued viewpoint diversity, and he claimed that they do. So we submitted a proposal requesting that the company put Mr. Bezos words into actions. However, the board balked at our request. That's a shame.

Diversity isn't what someone looks like. It's the sum of what they think, feel and believe. When the company takes overtly political positions on legal and policy issues, it would be a benefit to have voices from both sides of the aisle in the room.

And Amazon repeatedly takes left-wing positions. For example:

- The company recently opposed religious freedom legislation in Texas;ⁱ
- The company funds the far-left Human Rights Campaign – perhaps the nation's most bigoted anti-religious organization;ⁱⁱ
- Amazon even pledged legal support to oppose President Trump's orders on immigration and travel.ⁱⁱⁱ

Then there is Amazon's most inexplicable action – allowing the extremists at the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) to decide which groups are eligible for the Amazon smile charitable program.^{iv} Using its fake-hate list with completely subjective criteria, the SPLC lumps pro-family and Christian groups in with the Ku Klux Klan. Many mainstream conservative and Christian groups are shut out of Amazon Smile simply because the SPLC opposes their work.

If Amazon had even half of a conservative on the board, there is no way that the company would continue working with the SPLC. Heck, if anyone on the board even knows a true conservative, I suspect the company would cut ties with this vile group of bigots and hate mongers.

Whether you're willing to admit your bias is beyond the point. In business, perception is often reality. And our proposal provides a tangible way for the company to combat its bias.

We believe that boards that incorporate diverse perspectives can think more critically and oversee corporate managers more effectively. Appointing a few conservatives may help the company avoid groupthink. That's a win for investors and a win for true diversity.

Please join me in voting yes on Proposal #12. Thank you.

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ⁱ <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/texas-legislature/2019/03/27/amazon-google-facebook-pen-letter-opposing-texas-bills-allow-exclusion-lgbtq-people>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.hrc.org/hrc-story/corporate-partners>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/jan/31/amazon-expedia-microsoft-support-washington-action-against-donald-trump-travel-ban>

^{iv} <https://dailycaller.com/2019/03/27/amazon-smile-southern-poverty-law-center/>