

John Deere Shareholder Meeting Question
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My name is Justin Danhof, and I am representing the National Center for Public Policy Research – a free-market think-tank, and a company shareholder. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Mr. Allen, in July of last year, John Deere ended its relationship with the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) after it was race-baited by a group of extremists that included the group Color of Change – a group co-founded by “9/11 truther” and admitted communist Van Jones. This is a tiny organization that lists its headquarters as a mail drop in Oakland, California. It has a spokesman in media-rich Manhattan and acts as a race bully for the left by collecting signatures on online petitions and threatening to run commercials in black media to frighten targeted corporations.

John Deere, by contrast, is an international corporate giant that reported \$36.2 billion in sales and revenues for 2012.

By cowering to Color of Change’s political demands, which you clearly did since your company wrote a letter to Color of Change announcing your surrender, you gave corporate clout to a group of radicals who will further demonize free-market policy and legislative efforts such as the ones promoted by ALEC. Color of Change’s main official objection to ALEC was its work on state-level voter ID legislation – intended to protect voters from vote fraud.

Well, since you and other corporations ran from ALEC, it has stopped working on voter ID laws, but my organization has picked up the slack. And we will not be silenced.

Voter identification laws, by the way, enjoy wide public support, polling consistently above 70 percent approval. Approval for voter integrity laws is nearly universal as a majority of Republicans, Democrats, Independents, African Americans, Hispanics, men and women all support voter ID laws.

By capitulating to Color of Change, you have made this company a target for every crackpot left-wing outfit to come demand the company bend to its twisted will. Where does it end? What if they claim that the iconic John Deere green is racist? Are you going to repaint all the company tractors?

So my question is: Mr. Allen, will you commit today to reconsidering your membership in ALEC, or are you going to stand firm with the lowest form of race baiters in this country and continue to paint me, my organization and the more than 70 percent of Americans who support commonsense voter ID laws as racists?

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