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Investors Challenge Major Companies in Georgia over Donations to Lawmakers Pushing Racist Voter Suppression Bills

Investors affiliated with funds with \$1 trillion in assets under management call on Coca-Cola, Southern Company, AFLAC, Delta, UPS and Home Depot to account for support for elected officials backing voter suppression bills

ATLANTA, GA — Today, investors affiliated with funds with \$1 trillion in assets under management **sent letters** to board directors at Coca-Cola, Southern Company, AFLAC, Delta, UPS and Home Depot calling them to account for political spending support of legislators who are backing voter suppression bills moving through the Georgia state legislature. Raising concerns about the harmful impact of voter suppression and the reputational risks to companies affiliated with it, the investors are demanding answers as to whether the companies will forswear political contributions to legislators who attempt to restrict voting rights. The investors' efforts, supported by Majority Action and SEIU Workers United, builds on the growing momentum of Georgia voting rights activists who have been demanding the corporations oppose voter suppression bills for several weeks.

Georgia currently has multiple racist bills moving through the state House and Senate that if passed, would disenfranchise thousands of Black, Latino and AAPI voters, including SB 241, HB 531 and SB 202.

"As a trustee I know the power of capital and know these decisions are not good for these companies' bottom lines and create reputational risks for them. As a county election official, I know the importance of the right to vote and making sure that voting rights are protected. As the county clerk, that is a part of my job," said **Champaign County Clerk Aaron Ammons, who also is a Trustee of Illinois State University Retirement System**, an investor. "I am hoping that these corporations, these iconic brands, will speak out forcefully against these racially motivated attacks on voting rights in Georgia."

"Corporations have too often reinforced structural racism and white supremacy with political spending practices that harm and disenfranchise Black, Indigenous and other communities of color," said **Eli Kasargod-Staub, Executive Director of Majority Action**. "More and more investors now recognize and are calling on corporate leaders to change these practices that both undermine democracy and threaten long-term shareholder value."

“It is unconscionable and hypocritical for these corporations to claim they support racial justice when it is the easy thing to do, but to then sit on the sidelines while the freedom to vote for millions of Black, Latino and AAPI Georgians is being threatened by racist voter suppression bills,” said **Chris Baumann, Southern Region Director of SEIU Workers United**. “If Coca-Cola, Southern Company, AFLAC, Delta, UPS and Home Depot refuse to listen to the Black, Latinx and AAPI workers who are the backbone of these companies, perhaps they will listen to investors who are affiliated with funds managing \$1 trillion in assets under management who are demanding action. We once again call on them to publicly denounce these racist voter suppression bills and publicly commit to never giving them another dime in political contributions.”

The investors’ letters call attention to reputational risks for these companies, noting the contradiction between their support for elected officials backing voter suppression efforts and companies’ public statements in support of movements for racial justice released last summer. The investors also highlight that the corporations’ inaction creates substantial business risks and raises concerns about the companies’ governance and oversight of these issues, adding “alienating a significant portion of your company’s employees and consumer base by supporting elected officials driving a policy effort that would lead to mass disenfranchisement of voters of color is not a sound or sustainable business strategy.”

SEIU Workers United, in partnership with Progress Georgia, has been running a state-wide digital advertising campaign demanding that the companies publicly condemn the racist voter suppression bills. Several ads ask Georgians to sign petitions demanding the companies publicly oppose the racist voter suppression bills. After signing the petition, Georgians are also asked to email and call a list of Georgia legislators to demand that they oppose SB 241, HB 531 and SB 202. Several ads also note that Black buying power contributes more than \$106 billion to Georgia businesses every year — and the dollars they spend shouldn’t go to politicians who are working to suppress their votes.

About Majority Action

Majority Action is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering shareholders of all sizes to hold corporations and their leadership accountable to high standards of long-term value creation, corporate governance, and social responsibility. www.majorityaction.us

About SEIU Workers United

The Southern Region has locals in Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Our members work in laundries, they manufacture car parts, carpets, greeting cards, parachutes and bowling balls, and they work hard in trucking logistics, custom shirt sewing, distribution centers, and airport cleaning. Our newest locals represent university adjunct faculty, graduate students, cafeteria workers, and campus janitors. www.workersunited.org/southern-regional-joint-board