

Stop Paying for Your Destruction

Written by Dr. E. Faye Williams
Thursday, 14 June 2012 08:54



Many of us had never heard of the American Legislative Exchange Council until it was associated with the Trayvon Martin tragic murder in Florida. Little did we know food we eat, cars we buy, banks where we deposit our funds, equipment we use from companies and others we patronize, were members of ALEC—the Council we now know as the leading organization working with the National Rifle Association in supporting the horrendous Stand Your Ground laws that are popping up in many states.

We have learned that ALEC is supporting voter suppression laws, too. These laws would negate many of the principles dear to our democracy and prevent many people from voting. My grandmother never had a birth certificate or any government issued identification—not because she didn't want them, but because they were not available to her. There are numerous other African American seniors who are in the same position. Without these vital documents, they would be prevented from voting in the upcoming Presidential election. Most of us know someone who died to gain our precious right to vote.

Another sad fact that has come to our attention is that many of the corporations with which we spend our dollars support the work of ALEC. Perhaps some do so unwittingly. Others do so with full knowledge of what ALEC is doing to destroy some of our fundamental rights. Many of us have called, written, signed petitions and have done all we could to urge companies to withdraw their support.

For as long as I can remember, I have purchased my car insurance through State Farm. Imagine my shock when I saw that State Farm was on the list of ALEC members. I immediately called my agent who seemed not to know what I meant, so I sent him information that explained why State Farm should withdraw its membership from ALEC. State Farm didn't respond. I did,

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however, read a response State Farm sent to someone else stating that they had no intention of withdrawing from ALEC. That was enough for me to change my insurance to a company not on the ALEC membership list. That was my one small step, but real change in corporate policy will come when many customers take the same step!

There are many corporations other than State Farm supporting ALEC's right wing agenda. Check your list. Do you do business with Wendy's, Taco Bell, Walgreen, Pizza Hut, Sara Lee, Mary Kay, Kentucky Fried, American Express, Bank of America, (I closed that account, too!) Fed-Ex, UPS, Seagram's, Sony, Frito-Lay, Miller Brewing, Anheuser-Busch, J.C. Penny to name a few? If we continue to spend our dollars with these corporations, we are paying for our own destruction. It's time to cut our ties and do business with companies that respect us and support our communities.

Upon learning what their dues dollars paid for and after pressure from the public to do so, companies like Coca Cola, Pepsi Cola, Wal-Mart, Amazon, and Kraft Foods discontinued their membership in ALEC, and they are to be commended. The companies refusing to drop their membership should be excluded from your purchasing decisions without delay!

We cannot allow ALEC's ideologically driven agenda to recklessly promote bills that harm us, endanger innocent people and deny constitutional rights of millions.

We have an election coming up in a few months, and ALEC continues to push laws that would place unnecessary burdens on young people who are away from home in school, poor people, minorities, and the elderly. This is done under the guise of voter fraud. When is the last time you saw someone cheating to vote? The cheating we have seen has been to keep eligible people from voting!

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