



Amazon Keeps Southern Poverty Law Center as Gatekeeper at AmazonSmile

At the urging of Amazon’s board of directors, Amazon shareholders attending the company’s online annual meeting on Wednesday [rejected a resolution](#) to reevaluate the company’s reliance on the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) to vet charities under its AmazonSmile charity portal.

The resolution, offered by Amazon shareholder Justin Danhof on behalf of the National Center for Public Policy Research (a conservative think tank that supports religious liberty), asked the board to investigate its reliance on the SPLC. When the resolution was rejected, Danhof, a director at the NCPPR, reported, “Today, Amazon’s board of directors publicly and unequivocally endorsed viewpoint discrimination against Christian and conservative organizations. The board rejected our request that it reevaluate its reliance on the discredited Southern Poverty Law Center as the de facto gatekeeper of the AmazonSmile charitable program.”

That program, initiated in 2013, allows a purchaser to designate 0.5 percent of the sale price of eligible items he might purchase to go to the charity of his choice — but only if that charity is approved by the SPLC.

An Amazon spokesman explained:

All nonprofits are eligible as long as they meet our participation agreement. As part of that agreement, we also state that Amazon relies on the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control and the Southern Poverty Law Center to determine which charities are eligible.

In order for us to remove ourselves from the decision-maker ... because we don’t want to be biased whatsoever, we’re using the SPLC to establish the criteria for those organizations.

Amazon is allowing the SPLC to apply its own bias in selecting and approving eligible charities. As SPLC senior fellow Mark Potok stated, its decision over whom to blacklist has “nothing to do with criminality or violence or any kind of guess we’re making about [whether] ‘this group is dangerous.’ It’s strictly ideological.”

As a result, if a buyer goes to Smile.Amazon.com, he’ll find that he cannot select the Family Research Council, Alliance Defending Freedom, or ACT for America. He cannot find D. James Kennedy Ministries





Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on May 28, 2020

either, which has sued both Amazon and SPLC for defamation.

As gatekeeper at AmazonSmile and other groups and organizations that continue to rely on its ideologically-biased approval or denial, the SPLC shuts down debate, infringes on free speech and freedom of association, and delegitimizes honorable conservative organizations. At AmazonSmile, the SPLC also prohibits customers from contributing to numerous righteous causes.

Currently, AmazonSmile has generated nearly \$170 million from its customers. But the money only goes to charities preapproved by the SPLC.

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