

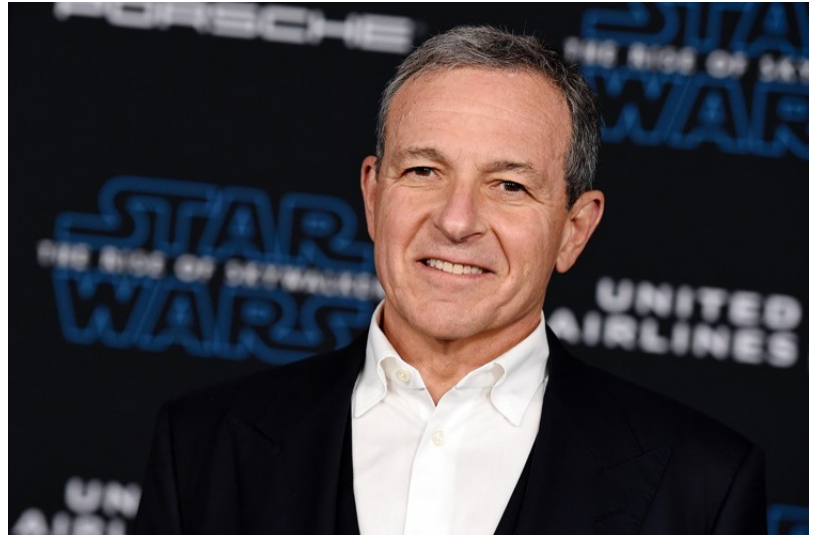


Written by [James Murphy](#) on December 2, 2022

New Disney Chief Regrets Battle With Florida Over Parental-rights Law

New Walt Disney CEO Bob Iger said that he regrets the turmoil that his company endured when his predecessor Bob Chapek essentially went to war with Florida Governor Ron DeSantis over the state's new Parental Rights in Education Law. The LGBT community universally referred to the legislation as the "Don't Say Gay" bill.

Iger had formerly helmed Disney, from 2005 until 2020, when his contract expired and he was replaced by Chapek. Bowing to outrage from LGBT employees, Chapek led the entertainment behemoth in a losing battle against DeSantis, who called Disney a "woke" corporation.



AP Images
Bob Iger

Former CEO Chapek even called the new Florida law a "challenge to basic human rights." And Disney's rhetoric after the law passed did not become less heated.

"Florida's [HB 1557](#), also known as the 'Don't Say Gay' bill, should never have been passed and never have been signed into law," a statement from Disney read. "Our goal as a company is for this law to be repealed by the legislature or struck down in the courts, and we remain committed to supporting the national and state organizations working to achieve that."

Iger, however, sounded a different tune when he spoke with Disney employees at a town hall event on November 20. Asked about Disney's left-wing political stance in connection with the Parental Rights in Education Law, Iger said, "I was sorry to see us dragged into that battle."

"The State of Florida has been important to us for a long time. And we have been very important to the State of Florida. That is something I'm extremely mindful of and will articulate if I get the chance," Iger told the audience.

Iger hoped he might be able to calm things down after years of left-wing politics being shoved on Disney's customers.

"Do I like the company being embroiled in controversy? Of course not," Iger said. "It can be distracting, and it can have a negative impact on the company. And to the extent that I can work to kind of quiet things down, I'm going to do that."

While Iger stated that the company will still push forward with "inclusion" of LGBT people in the theme parks and movies aimed at children, he lamented that the company had become so involved in politics. However, in essence he said that the LGBT militancy must go, and that the company must "listen to [its] audience" and "have respect for the people that [it's] serving."

If Iger hopes to make that case with Florida's current governor, he may find some tough sledding. On



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Fox News' *Tucker Carlson Tonight*, DeSantis shared his side of the story.

"We didn't drag them in, Tucker," DeSantis said. "They went in on their own. They not only opposed the bill, they threatened to get it repealed."

"These are parents' rights, important policies in our state that are very popular," DeSantis added. "And so they [Disney] brought this on themselves. All we did was stand up for what's right. And, yes, they're a big, powerful company. But you know what? We stand up for our folks. And I don't care what a Burbank-based California company says about our laws."

Under Chapek, the company reported a \$1.47 billion operating loss in the last quarter and had announced a hiring freeze, layoffs, and other cost-cutting measures.

Disney's left-wing activism eventually resulted in the company losing its special self-governing tax status with Florida, also known as the Reedy Creek Improvement District, which gave Disney the right to, among other things, create its own police force.

So, Iger clearly has his work cut out for him.

Their latest animated release, *Strange World*, which features a gay couple as protagonists, just suffered an abysmal opening weekend. Their supposed summer blockbuster *Lightyear*, based on the beloved "Buzz Lightyear" character from the *Toy Story* franchise, suffered a similar flop at the box office earlier this year. *Lightyear* also featured gay characters and a gay kiss.

So, Disney has learned the hard way what "get woke, go broke," really means.



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