



September 9, 2024

Ron Vachris
Chief Executive Officer
Costco Wholesale Corp.
999 Lake Drive
Issaquah, WA 98027

Dear Mr. Vachris,

We the undersigned are state financial officers. We write to express our concerns about recent efforts from the New York City Comptroller (Comptroller) urging you to dispense the abortion drug mifepristone.¹ The Comptroller’s actions are clear attempts to politicize Costco’s business without regard for the company’s financial wellbeing.

The Comptroller urged you to dispense the abortion drug to “maximiz[e] sales and long-term shareholder value” and take advantage of this “growing market opportunity.” He did not ask you to consider dispensing it or even to dispense it on a trial basis. Instead, he said you must do so “immediately” in every “state where it is legal.”

This radical position ignores all of the business decisions that go into whether to sell a particular product—decisions that should be made by Costco’s leadership

¹ Press Release, *NYC Comptroller Presses Pharmacy Giants To Provide Abortion Medication or Risk Losing Investor Confidence*, Office of New York City Comptroller Brad Lander (July 17, 2024).

based on how it will serve their customers. Costco recently admitted that there was no material demand for the drug.²

The Comptroller's efforts are part of a disturbing trend of public servants leveraging the pension funds of government employees for political gain. For example, in May, the New York State Comptroller, who manages and administers the New York State and Local Retirement System (NYSLRS), recently retaliated against Best Buy for negotiating with the National Center for Public Policy Research over Best Buy's support for "controversial" nonprofit organizations.³ The Comptroller even went so far as to say that he would vote against re-electing Best Buy's chairman because of it.⁴

In another recent example, the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) joined hands with activist shareholders pressuring ExxonMobil to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, a move that many see as directly contrary to the company's interests.⁵ CalPERS stated in an open letter that it would vote against all of Exxon's 12 director nominees and its CEO because of the matter.

As public officials who oversee various aspects of the financial interests of our own states, state employees, and citizens whom we represent, we find these actions to be inappropriate. They are an attempt to launder political views thorough the commercial marketplace with little regard for the companies or their shareholders. Pushing political issues onto companies harms business, weakens investor fiduciary standards, and is detrimental to the ultimate beneficiaries who depend on strong economic results for their retirement.

Companies do best when they provide excellent goods and services to their customers, not when they adopt divisive stances on contentious political issues. We are calling on Costco to fulfill that purpose and to ignore activist efforts like the New York City Comptrollers'.

We request your assurance that you will disregard the New York City Comptroller's letter.

Sincerely,

² Town Hall, Michael Ross Opinion, [Costco, Walmart Must Resist Activist Demands From NYC Comptroller](#)

³ Matt Lavietes and Brooke Sopelsa, *Top New York official asks Best Buy about its commitment to LGBTQ groups after conservative pressure*, NBC News (May 2, 2024).

⁴ Patrick Coffee, *New York Pension Fund to Vote Against Best Buy Chairman in Dispute Over LGBTQ Support*, The Wall Street Journal (July 3, 2024).

⁵ Rohan Goswami, *Exxon faces opposition from CalPERS after 'devastating' anti-ESG activist suit*, CNBC (May 20, 2024).



Alaska Commissioner of Revenue Adam Crum



Idaho Treasurer Julie Ellsworth



Indiana Comptroller Elise Nieshalla



Kansas Treasurer Steven Johnson



Louisiana Treasurer John Fleming



Mississippi Treasurer David McRae



Nebraska Auditor Mike Foley



Nebraska Treasurer Tom Briese



Nevada Controller Andy Matthews



Ohio Treasurer Robert Sprague



Oklahoma Treasurer Todd Russ



South Carolina Treasurer Curtis Loftis



South Dakota Treasurer Josh Haeder



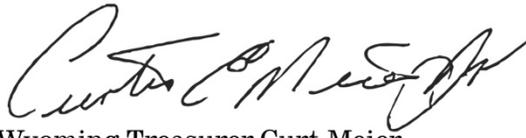
Texas Comptroller Glenn Hegar



Utah Auditor John Dougall



Utah Treasurer Marlo Oaks



Wyoming Treasurer Curt Meier