NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Google and the U.S. gun lobby

Claire Schaeffer-Duffy | Dec. 11, 2013 NCR Today

What do Google and the U.S. gun lobby have in common? Support for pro-gun legislation it seems. The communication company best known for bringing us an internet search engine funds the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). Once described as a ?bill/mill,? ALEC drafts pro- industry law for state legislatures. Among the many bills credited to ALEC are controversial voter suppression legislation and the stand-your-ground law which was used by George Zimmerman to justify the shooting of unarmed black youth, Trayvon Martin.

According to *The Guardian [1]*, ALEC suffered a decline in membership among Republican state legislators and corporations in the wake of the Martin controversy. The network lost the backing of 400 state legislators and funding from 60 corporations. Google is apparently a new contributor. News of its involvement with ALEC has prompted an online petition which you can sign here [2].

In addition to seeking new monies, the lobbying network is reportedly trying to woo back some of its lapsed corporate donors ? Coca-Cola, Walmart and Amazon, to name a few ? with an initiative sacrilegiously entitled the ?Prodigal Son Project.? ALEC is also establishing a sister organization, the Jefferson Project in the hope of avoiding some of the legal, tax, and ethical challenges stemming from its lobbying efforts, *The Guardian* reports. An excerpt from the article reads:

"Any activity that could be done by Alec may be done by Jeffersonian Project if legal counsel advises it would provide greater legal protection or lessen ethics concerns," a note on the proposed new body [3] to Alec's board of directors says. The note adds that the Jeffersonian Project would remove "questions of ethical violations made by our critics and state ethics boards and provides further legal protection."

The Guardian goes on to note that with its ?model bills,? ALEC has aggressively backed measures to ?privatize public education, cut taxes, reduce public employee compensation and workplace rights, oppose Obamacare, and resist state action to reduce global warming gas emissions.?

Here [4] a listing of for-profit corporations involved with ALEC.

Source URL (retrieved on *08/28/2014 - 03:54*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/google-and-us-gun-lobby

Links:
[1] http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/03/alec-funding-crisis-big-donors-trayvon-martin
[2] http://act.rootsaction.org/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=8648
[3] https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/841593-alec-docs.html#document/p13/a134830
[4] http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=ALEC_Corporations#For-Profit_Corporations