

Robert Iger
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
The Walt Disney Company
Burbank, California

Dear Mr. Iger:

We are writing you to urge that the Walt Disney Company cease funding the United States Chamber of Commerce.

As you know, Disney has made several commitments related to the fight against climate change. It has committed to reduce its net greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by 2020.¹ Disney has also signed both the American Business Act on Climate Pledge in support of the Paris Agreement² and the CERES Climate Change Declaration.³

Disney has also recognized the severe public health threat posed by the use of tobacco products. It has banned depictions of smoking in all G, PG, and PG-13 movies⁴ that it produces and it does not allow smoking in its theme parks.⁵ We appreciate the steps you have taken to limit depictions of tobacco use in films released under the Disney label.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is doing everything it can to block efforts to combat both climate change and anti-smoking laws and regulations. It opposes the Paris Agreement⁶ that you publicly support, is suing to block the implementation of the Clean Power Plan,⁷ consistently lobbies against legislation aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions,⁸ and spends millions of dollars in money on elections ads urging voters to back candidates who support the fossil fuel industry and oppose efforts to combat climate change.⁹ In short, the Chamber is one of the biggest obstacles to serious, effective action on climate change here in the U.S. And of course, without action in the U.S., we will be unable to realistically address what is truly a global problem.

In countries around the world, the Chamber and its affiliates have lobbied against anti-smoking laws and regulations, including working to protect the tobacco industry's youth-marketing tactics in Uruguay, campaigning against a tobacco control law in Moldova, and trying to stop graphic health warnings from being printed on tobacco products in Burkina Faso, among countless other efforts across the globe.¹⁰

¹ Disney's Environmental Stewardship Goals and Targets, pg. 7, The Walt Disney Co., <http://bit.ly/1KfGEfa>

² White House Announces Additional Commitments to the American Business Act on Climate Pledge, The White House, <http://bit.ly/2o7rerT>

³ CERES Climate Change Declaration, CERES, <http://bit.ly/2nloJZE>

⁴ Smoking in Movies, The Walt Disney Co., <http://bit.ly/2oOjFEV>

⁵ Smoke-Free Policy, The Walt Disney Co., <http://bit.ly/2nIGYxX>

⁶ Chamber Inflates Costs, Ignores Benefits of Climate Action, NRDC, <http://on.nrdc.org/2nPHPOj>

⁷ U.S. Chamber Files Lawsuit Challenging EPA's Unprecedented Attempt to Restructure Nation's Electricity System, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, <http://bit.ly/1LrOfcU>

⁸ The U.S. Chamber: A Record of Obstruction on Climate Action, Yale Environment 360, <http://bit.ly/2paIFGQ>

⁹ See, e.g., U.S. Chamber ads against Katie McGuinty, for Rob Portman, and for James Comer, available at <http://bit.ly/29hWcU1>, <http://bit.ly/2nmF3E3>, <http://bit.ly/2oRsqxO>, and <http://bit.ly/2oRsPQJ>

¹⁰ U.S. Chamber of Commerce Blowing Smoke for Big Tobacco, <http://bit.ly/2ohpHjh>

Many of these campaigns have taken place in developing countries where tobacco companies are looking to addict a whole new generation of customers.

The problems with funding the Chamber do not stop with its leading role opposing action on climate change and fighting anti-smoking laws and regulations. The Chamber has also increasingly become a highly partisan political organization. It formed an explicit alliance with leading Republicans to “Save the Senate” (for Republicans) in the 2016 elections.¹¹ The Chamber was the largest spender of secret or dark money on congressional elections in the 2016 cycle and it spent 100 percent of its money for the benefit of Republican candidates.¹² The Chamber is now working hand in glove with President Trump and Republicans in Congress to enact its anti-environmental, anti-consumer agenda. Your customer base and employees are ideologically diverse, and purchasing Disney products, viewing Disney films, or visiting Disney Parks should not require consumers to fund a partisan agenda with which many may disagree. By way of comparison, Disney’s 2016 political spending was exactly even, giving \$93,250 each to both Democrats and Republicans.¹³

Many large companies such as Apple, Pacific Gas & Electric, Exelon,¹⁴ and CVS¹⁵ have already considered the repercussions of the Chamber's reactionary agenda on their brands and businesses and chosen to publicly leave the Chamber. Many other Fortune 500 companies have quietly left the Chamber as well.¹⁶ We urge you to join these companies in reconsidering the nature of your relationship with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and its hyper-partisan anti-climate, pro-tobacco agenda. The Chamber’s agenda is bad for both public health and the health of the planet and its secret money political spending is bad for a transparent democracy.

Sincerely,

Action on Smoking and Health

African American Ministers In Action (AAMIA)

Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization (ADAO)

Broome Tioga Green Party

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

Cancer Aid Society

Center for Biological Diversity

Center for Food Safety

Center for Media and Democracy

Center for Popular Democracy

Citizens' Environmental Coalition

¹¹ Business Makes Senate Push, The Wall Street Journal, <http://on.wsj.com/2oNkikD>

¹² The Republican Party and the Chamber of Secrets, Public Citizen, <http://bit.ly/2hdVXNL>

¹³ 2016 Contributions Report, The Walt Disney Co., <http://bit.ly/2nTqu7b>

¹⁴ Discord in Chamber of Commerce, Forbes, <http://bit.ly/2nToD2a>

¹⁵ CVS Health Leaves U.S. Chamber of Commerce, The Washington Post, <http://wapo.st/2o6yanf>

¹⁶ Based on coalition communications with more than two dozen Fortune 500 companies

Clean Water Action
Compassionate Communication Spokane
Consumer Action
Consumers for Auto Reliability and Safety
Corporate Accountability International
CREDO Action
Daily Kos
DNF - Les Droits des Non-Fumeurs
Economic Policy Institute
Family Values at Work
Green America
Greenpeace
Health and Trade Network
Homeowners Against Deficient Dwellings
Human Rights and Tobacco Control Network
The Impact Fund
In the Public Interest
Institute for Science and Human Values
Interfaith Worker Justice
Jeewaka Foundation
Labor Project for Working Families
League of Conservation Voters
National Council Against Smoking
National Economic & Social Rights Initiative
National Family Farm Coalition
Non-Smokers' Rights Association
Oil Change International
OxyRomandie
People Demanding Action
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Progressive Congress Action Fund
Protect All Children's Environment
Public Citizen
Public Justice Center

Rainforest Action Network

RootsAction.org

SafeWork Washington

Sierra Club

Smoke Free Partnership

Social Security Works

South Carolina Small Business Chamber of Commerce

Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA)

SumOfUS

Tanzania Tobacco Control Forum (TTCF)

Tobacco Free Research Institute Ireland

U.S. PIRG

Virginia Organizing

Workplace Fairness