

# As He Pretends Anheuser-Busch is an American Company, CEO Brendan Whitworth Fails Leadership Test



Statement of Peter Flaherty, Chairman of the National Legal and Policy Center:

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Anheuser-Busch has finally addressed the controversy that has embroiled the company since April 1 when it centered a Bud Light promotion around transgender “influencer” Dylan Mulvaney.

Only problem is, Anheuser-Busch CEO Brendan Whitworth released a **statement Friday** addressing the issue by not addressing it, accomplishing nothing but to underscore his own helplessness and guaranteeing that the conflagration will continue.

Whitworth’s statement asserted that “we never intended to be part of a discussion that divides people.” But nowhere could he even say what the “discussion” is about, as if the topic was too hot to even mention.

He doesn’t say it was a mistake for a beer company to promote transgenderism, nor does he defend the ad campaign. It is as if he had to say something if only to quiet his coterie of underlings and PR consultants who were no doubt urging him to say something.

He took the faintest stab possible to assuage consumers who might most object to the promotion by saluting “military, first responders, sports fans and hard-working Americans everywhere.” But he could not state the obvious about why all these great people might object to Dylan Mulvaney, namely that men cannot become women, and that it is a folly for anyone, much less a beer company, to advance this lie.

Unfortunate for Whitworth, he is handcuffed by the company’s long association with activists who would turn on him as quickly and eagerly as they have accepted his company’s support and money over the years. Anheuser-Busch gets a **perfect 100 score** on the Human Rights Campaign so-called Corporate Equality Index, and the company **promotes gender ideology** in its internal training programs.

Whitworth fails the leadership test. It’s easy to lay claim to effective institutional management when all the choices are good. Real leadership becomes evident, however, when the choices are bad. But maybe we shouldn’t be so hard on poor Whitworth because his authority as CEO is not what it seems.

Whitworth, whose actual title is “CEO North American Zone,” proudly reports that Anheuser-Busch was “founded in America’s heartland more than 165 years ago,” but he does not mention that the company was sold to the multinational InBev in 2008. The company is now known as Anheuser-Busch Inbev SA/NV, and is incorporated and headquartered in Belgium. In addition, CEO **Michael Doukeris** is a Brazilian citizen.

According the **company’s website**, nine of its 12 directors are appointed by something called “Stichting Anheuser-Busch InBev,” which it describes as “a foundation organised under the laws of the Netherlands, which represents an important part of the interests of the Belgian founding families of the Company and the interests of the Brazilian families previously shareholders of AmBev.”

So, Whitworth’s real bosses are a group of ultrarich Europeans and South Americans, who will ultimately act in what they perceive to be their own interests, not those of American beer drinkers. These plutocrats attempt to keep the attention off their wealth by buying off the activists who might challenge it. That is why the company panders to, and bankrolls, a host of woke causes worldwide.

Like Unilever, another Europe-based multinational whose American subsidiary Ben & Jerry’s plunged it into controversy (when it ended ice cream sales in the disputed territories of Israel), Anheuser-Busch InBev abets social and political causes that undermine the cultural values and economic interests of the consumers they purport to serve.

*National Legal and Policy Center (NLPC) sponsors the Corporate Integrity Project. When Anheuser-Busch was still an independent company, NLPC filed a series of shareholder proposals seeking disclosure of its financial support for political and social activist groups.*

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## Company Website

<http://www.nlpc.org>

## Tags

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