

Dyana Martinez_University of Texas at Austin_Done_Persuasive...

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SPEAKERS

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This summer 80 year old David Horowitz took the stage in New Orleans to make some bold statements. The September 12, 2018 Southern Poverty Law Center explains. He claimed the Black Lives Matter movement had taken over the public school curriculum, called the Muslim Brotherhood, a terrorist organization and declared the real race war was against white people. seconds later, he received a standing ovation. But David wasn't at a neo nazi rally. He was at a fancy dinner with our country's top politicians and billionaires. The September 15, 2018 intercept explains David was speaking to the American Legislative Exchange Council or ALEC for short. The September 17, 2018 Huffington Post explains ALEC is an organization of Right leaning corporations and the ghostwriter behind some of our lawmakers wildly terrible ideas, like privatizing prisons, sabotaging Obamacare, and allowing senior care facilities to cover up abuse. Despite their atrocious ideas and massive influence, ALEC doesn't get much media attention besides the random article every few years, and the occasional info. We've tried time and time again to expose and undercut ALEC influence to no avail. But the aforementioned Southern Poverty Law Center warns we must pay attention now. Since 1973, ALEC has empowered conservative politics. But with speakers like David Horowitz spewing hate at ALEC conferences, the organization may soon begin to embrace hate mongering to advance their corporate agenda. So let's suppress their influence before they have time to make a choice. To do so we don't need to examine causes and effects but instead, who ALEC serves, the bills they write, and identify solutions to an organization that undermines every legislative solution proposed in this round. Unlike other lobbying groups who advocate on behalf of corporate clients in hopes of influencing legislation, ALEC is an organization of corporations that just writes the legislation for lazy politicians. ALEC is quite literally a corporate bill mill that cheapens our democracy. So let's understand why they've remained so influential by looking to their corporate and political tests. Initially, ALEC consists of a list of corporations the organization refuses to release, source wash.org last updated in February 9, 2019 reveals some of Alec's most notable members, Comcast, UPS and the infamous Koch Industries, but the organization commitment isn't just to mainstream money, but to endanger an historically corrupt industries. Hidden behind the more recognizable names are the management and training Corporation, America's third largest private prison company, or Pfizer, the world's largest pharmaceutical giant, but perhaps most surprising, ALEC places, the conservative Texas Roadhouse and Cracker Barrel on their commerce, economic development and insurance Task Force.

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For an organization that prides itself on expert research, using restaurants more concerned with sweeping peanut shells than helping people isn't ethical. Second, ALEC creates relationships with historically powerful politicians to reinforce their influence. The Center for Media and Democracy confirms 11 International politicians, both Bush's and even Ronald Reagan had ties to ALEC and in Alabama politics alone 23 politicians are members of ALEC, including their 2014 state legislator of the year. But Common Dreams of January 23, 2019 points out, politicians like these don't just take model bills from ALEC. ALEC has begun creating toolkits featuring deceptive phrases to discuss hot button issues like the workers rights. So ALEC is both writing our laws and feeding words to our politicians. This is so unpatriotic. It's not even America first anymore, It's money first. Different from other groups like the National Rifle Association or the National Abortion Rights Action League, who are totally clear about their goals in their names. ALEC is anything but transparent. Their website claims they're dedicated to the principles of limited government free markets and federalism. But a 2013 study conducted by the Brookings Institution reveals they've written more bills about immigration than anything else. So let's understand their work by looking to the past laws and future agenda. Initially, ALEC has written some really powerful laws ThinkProgress of July 16, 2018 explains some of their lesser known efforts involved forbidding paid sick leave, reducing minimum wage and voter suppression. But ALEC is infamous for its stand your ground laws, which are disproportionately affecting men of color like Ziad Naim, who the Texas Observer of September 18, 2016 reveals, was killed seconds after his shooter yelled, "go back to Islam". He received no jail time thanks to ALEC's work. Individuals that remain in ALEC have let people like Ziad die in vain. Second, ALEC likes to keep their plans secret, but NationofChange of September 16, 2018 reveals their most recent agenda. At their annual conference, ALEC proposed a bill in line with the NRA's plans To give local governments jurisdiction over school safety. Considering the rampant increase in school gun violence, this agenda isn't just misguided. It's malicious. More recently, PR watch November 28 2018 explains at their anniversary gala, ALEC proposed bills shunning unions, providing explicit support for Trump climate policy, and suggesting bullying victims should simply move from public to private school. And not a single mainstream news source reported this proving

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ALEC is playing a dangerous game of politics without ever showing their hand. It took Trayvon Martin's death for the public to realize ALEC have been quietly passing stand your ground laws. Trayvon's death forced many individuals to leave the organization. But we cannot wait for another innocent victim to begin suppressing their influence.

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So let's look for solutions.

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Initially, take your money elsewhere. public pressure on companies like Walmart, Pepsi and GM forced them to cut ties with ALEC. And ThinkProgress of April 17, 2012 explains, forced ALEC to do away with their public safety and elections Task Force, we can begin to eliminate other companies and task forces by spreading the word. So I created a box of non ALEC treats most needed at tournaments. For instance, if you have a headache, don't take Alleve, It's made by Bayer which funds ALEC instead, here's a Tylenol

with a QR code that links to a list of products and how you can tell them about ALEC. Please find me after the round to inspect my entire treasure chest of non ALEC treats. Finally, keep up with information about ALEC. I've created a website called Abandoning ALEC.com where I'm publishing any new instance of legislation that matches ALEC model bills along with the corresponding representatives information. Please reach out and demand they withdraw the bill. I've also created a tab on the website that features a real citizen draft of legislation. Look, Realistically speaking, politicians will never stop crowdsourcing laws. So let's make sure they're getting them from people like us, instead of corporations with hidden agendas. Throughout the year, I've written legislation and collected a bunch more from classmates, graduate students and fellow competitors. Please find me after the round give me every bill you've written. I'd love to feature you on my website, and the packet I'm dropping off at my state capitol this summer. After the round,

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take a card and visit the website. They both cost a lot of money and I am now very broke.

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Feel free to share them with student political organizations at your school instead of waiting for the random article that will tell us of the legislative atrocities ALEC will have already enacted. Because by that time, it may be too late to undo the damage ALEC will have done. If after examining who ALEC serves, the bills they write, and identifying solutions. You're wondering what a 10 minute long speech can do to a mega organization like ALEC, you must remember the severity of their impact. ALEC's laws are written to make us feel like the little guy, so we cannot shy away from suppressing their unchecked political influence. Let's make sure the work of an organization that makes a racist their keynote speaker ends with the work of speakers like us.