

## 'Hit them where it hurts': Americans boycott corporations to protest anti-DEI policies

By Adria R Walker, *The Guardian*, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025

On Friday, Americans across the country are participating in an economic boycott for 24 hours. Organized by the People's Union USA, a nonpartisan, grassroots organization, the boycott quickly picked up steam across social media, with thousands of users sharing posts with related hashtags. Participants are asked not to spend any money, and if they need to, it is recommended that they shop at a local, small business and pay in cash.

"February 28 is a symbolic start to economic resistance, a day where we show corporations and politicians that we control the economy," reads the organization's website. "The date itself is not tied to any historical event, it is the beginning of something bigger."

Spurred by anger about companies rolling back their diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts, in response to large-scale government cuts by Donald Trump and Elon Musk's so-called "department of government efficiency" (Doge), some consumers are attempting to show their discontent with their wallets.

Hundreds of people from across the country responded to a Guardian questionnaire in which they detailed their decisions to stop shopping at stores like Target or Walmart and to stop using companies like Amazon, Meta and X (formerly Twitter), even if it is inconvenient.

Eric Butcher, from Bakersfield, California, said that he decided to participate in the boycott because it is "the only way that we can make folks understand that their decisions are affecting everyone."

He continued: "These billionaires have an unprecedented amount of access to the government, to the president, to the congressional members. All the dark and powerful money has always been in our politics, but now it's unprecedented. It's so public and in your face. The only thing that they understand is money. So we have to hit them where it hurts."

"With all the cuts to federal funding for healthcare, CDC, the impending cuts for Medicaid, – this is gonna kill people" he said.

Lisa Rayner, a small business owner in Santa Fe, New Mexico, said that sees participation as a way to show that people can come together and organize in solidarity.

"[I hope] people learn that they can live without these big corporations," she said. "Maybe it gives them time to reflect on how to live their lives differently as citizens rather than consumers and to feel like, yes, we can do it. We can cooperate, and we can beat them."

Friday's boycott is occurring simultaneously with other economic protests: We Are Somebody, a labor advocacy group, launched a boycott of Target that started on 1 February, to coincide with Black History Month, in response to Target's decision to roll back DEI initiatives. Starting on 5 March, the first day of Lent, some Black faith leaders are calling on Christians to participate in a 40-day boycott of the company.

The Latino Freeze movement, a nonpartisan grassroots effort that supports immigrant and Latino communities, keeps a targeted boycott list and is also asking people to stop spending at certain companies "until they show us they care about our minority and immigrant populations of the United States".