Activating your Power as a Shareholder

Do you own stocks? Mutual funds? Are you invested in a retirement plan? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions there are several ways you can activate your ownership and work to influence the corporations where you are invested. Follow the steps below to learn more about how you can take control over your ownership and help the companies you own become better corporate citizens.

Step 1: Know your options
Before you can vote on shareholder resolutions, you first have to know your investment situation. Do you manage your own accounts? Do you have a financial manager or mutual fund company doing this for you (think: Vanguard, Fidelity, or T. Rowe Price)?

As an investor, and therefore part owner, in publicly-traded companies, you have options to advocate for environmental, social and governance changes. You can do this by voting for resolutions that appear on a company's annual proxy statement, or by filing your own resolution if it meets certain criteria.

Shareholder resolutions are proposals brought to a company by investors for consideration at the annual meeting. These resolutions often call for change within the company, such as the successful proposal to ExxonMobil in 2017, calling on the company to improve its reporting on climate change (read more about Exxon here: (https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/faith-based-investors-gain-ground- exxonmobil-climate-change/). Proposals often focus on environmental, social and governance issues within a company. While these proposals are not binding, the final vote count indicates the will of investors (the owners of the company) and will often be addressed by the Directors.

Step 2: Vote your proxy
The shareholder proposals discussed above appear on the company's proxy statement. The law requires public companies to report to shareholders, often through the annual meeting. The proxy statement includes annual meeting details, board information, compensation details, and shareholder proposals. These are sent to shareholders prior to the annual meeting and include a provision allowing shareholders to cast their votes "by proxy" rather than attend the annual meeting in-person.

Vote yourself – if you receive one of these proxy statements in the mail, follow the instructions and vote! It will include options for voting via email, internet, mail or phone. Note: each shareholder proposal will be accompanied by a management statement, often recommending a "vote against" the proposal. Every year the PC(USA)'s Committee on

Mission Responsibility through Investment releases a proxy voting guide. Feel free to use this to help guide your votes, as it's based on church policy and environmental, social, and governance principles. You can find the guide here under "MRTI Resources for Active Ownership of Invested Funds".

Instruct your investment manager to vote for you – If a financial manager controls your investments, you can instruct them to vote for you. Reach out to your manager via mail or email, requesting a list of the resolutions for your invested companies. You can then instruct the manager how to vote, or provide a list of guidelines for the manager to follow.

If you own mutual funds – the funds where you are invested technically own the shares of companies rather than you. You cannot control how managers vote for mutual fund shares. However, you can communicate with, and encourage the managers to vote on shareholder resolutions. Historically, managers have voted following the advice of company management, or abstained from voting. This is slowly changing, in large part due to shareholder advocacy. You can reach out to your managers and ask for their voting records and guidelines for how they vote on environmental, social and governance issues. Mutual funds and other investment companies are required to disclose the policies and procedures guiding their proxy-voting. It's your right to request this information.

Questions? Contact staff at the Office of Faith-Based Investing and Shareholder Engagement by calling (800) 728-7228 x5035 or emailing mrti@pcusa.org.

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