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Stand.Earth
1329 N State Street, Suite 302
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RE: WBA Membership & Association

Alex Ramel and Matt Krogh

On May 26th, 2017, I received your letter threatening reputational damage to my business if I did not acquiesce to your demand that my business dis-associate with the Whatcom Business Alliance (WBA) by June 5th, 2017.

In response, let me first inform you why Tradewinds Capital Management is a member of the WBA. I believe in strong civic organizations, because it is through these organizations that we give voice to the issues in our community and create a dialog with the stakeholders to arrive at workable solutions. In addition, while I may not be personally invested in an issue that another of my fellow business owners is affected by, I find it important to stand beside them in solidarity as they also seek to remain relevant in today's fast changing, politically charged environment. My belief is that if the tables were turned and I found my business being threatened by a political, social or extremist agenda, my fellow business people would come to my aid in defense of my right to operate a legal, ethical and profitable business in this community. The WBA provides an important venue for the voice of business to be heard in this community.

As I stand beside over 250 fellow businesses of Whatcom County, I have asked myself, "who are Alex Ramel and Matt Krogh? What is the agenda of this organization they claim to represent? And why should I respect and adhere to their demand?"

First, the two of you and I have no personal relationship. You have never engaged with my business nor asked me for a dialog to express your concerns or explain your agenda. My first interaction with you and your organization (stand.earth) comes in the form of a threatening letter. I have also never seen your faces at the many events and fundraisers that support the health and social fabric of this community such as Rotary, the Hospice Foundation, the St. Joseph Hospital Foundation, NW Youth Services, etc. Outside of your narrow agenda, I am hard-pressed to see any evidence whatsoever that you are engaged members of this community.

Second, in researching your organization and the people you claim to represent in my community I found that I do have personal relationships with three of your board members. I communicated with all three of these board members; they claimed they were unaware of your activities concerning the sending of threatening letters to the membership of the WBA. This points to the fact that the organization (stand.earth) that you are representing does not have good governance or you have gone rogue.

Finally, I find it offensive that you should come into my community and try to tear down what others have built. Your threat to impoverish the businesses associated as the WBA, the owners and employees of those businesses, and therefore the community is short-sighted and damaging to all Whatcom County residents.

I will not rescind my membership with Whatcom Business Alliance. I will not abandon my fellow business owners who are working hard to provide good jobs for their employees, great products and services for their customers and clients, and profitable businesses that can give back to the social organizations that serve the needs of our community.

Now you have my attention and my answer.

Respectfully,

Bryant J Engebretson, CFP®, CLU®, AIF®, AEP®, ChFC®, CASL®
Tradewinds Capital Management, LLC