



April 10, 2026

Peter ter Kulve
CEO, Magnum Ice Cream Company

Jochanan Senf
CEO, Ben & Jerry's

Messrs. Ter Kulve and Senf,

I'm writing on behalf of the Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG) to reflect on the long and meaningful relationship between Ben & Jerry's and the people of Vermont, and to share concerns about recent developments.

For decades, Ben & Jerry's has been more than an ice cream company. It has been a partner in advancing issues that matter to Vermonters – from environmental protection and climate action to economic justice and strong local communities.

As Vermont's largest environmental and consumer advocacy organization, VPIRG has been proud to work alongside Ben & Jerry's, its founders, and the Ben & Jerry's Foundation on efforts ranging from campaign finance reform to supporting Vermont farmers. These collaborations have shown that a business can succeed while remaining deeply committed to the public good.

That legacy matters not only in Vermont but to customers everywhere who see Ben & Jerry's as a company willing to stand up for values beyond just profit.

I am writing with urgency because recent developments involving the Magnum Ice Cream Company and Ben & Jerry's raise serious questions about the brand's current commitment to that legacy.

Public reporting and statements from the company's founders point to actions that appear to weaken the governance structure designed to protect Ben & Jerry's independence and social mission. These include limiting the authority of the independent board, sidelining key members, and changing governance rules in ways that reduce the board's ability to act as a meaningful steward of the company's values.

At the same time, disputes over the company's ability to speak out and act on social and political issues suggest a shift away from what has long distinguished Ben & Jerry's. The company's leadership on sourcing, farming practices, and social causes has always depended on a willingness to take real action that would help people and the planet in the long term, even if it conflicted with short-term corporate priorities.

These tensions have now escalated into litigation and public appeals from the founders, raising concerns that the commitments made at the time of the 2000 acquisition – especially the authority of an independent board – are being eroded. The issue is not theoretical: it is whether the structures that enabled Ben & Jerry's to become an iconic company leading on justice and community issues still function today.

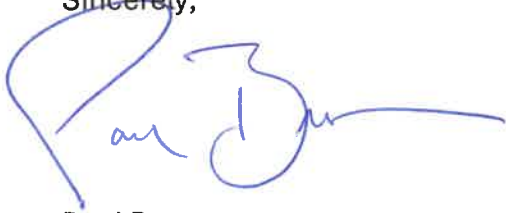
From our perspective, what has made Ben & Jerry's special is not just what it says, but what it is willing to do: leading, taking risks, and sometimes accepting costs to uphold its principles. That is the standard Vermonters continue to expect.

We urge you to protect and strengthen that legacy by ensuring that Ben & Jerry's retains the independence, voice, and authority necessary to act on its values in meaningful ways. Credibility, once lost, is difficult to rebuild, and many are watching closely.

VPIRG remains committed to continued partnership in advancing solutions for our communities and our planet – provided the values that define that partnership remain intact.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would appreciate your response to these concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Burns", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Paul Burns
Executive Director