

Cub Scout Pack 345
San Francisco, California
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May 15, 2013

Boy Scouts of America
National Council
1325 W. Walnut Hill Lane
Irving, Texas 75038

Dear Members of the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America:

Cub Scout Pack 345 in San Francisco has just celebrated its 27th year of helping boys grow through Scouting. For the past 20 years we have been continuously sponsored by Elks Lodge #3 in San Francisco.

The parents of Pack 345 take seriously our charge to preserve and protect the reputation and mission of the Boy Scouts so that we may pass on to future generations the gifts that Scouting offers to growing young men.

We therefore feel compelled to speak out against an injustice that threatens the soul of our organization: the BSA's national policy of discrimination against gay Scouts and Scouters.

In addition to skills and leadership, Scouting teaches morality. We are proud to report that we know of no Scout or parent in Pack 345 who believes that denying participation in Scouting on the basis of sexuality is morally correct.

In our community we have members who are openly gay. They are our co-workers, our neighbors, our friends, and in some cases our family. To us they are not homosexuals -- they are Robert and Jeff, Traci and Kathy. We look into their eyes every day. We know they love their children as much as we do and will protect their children from harm. Their sexual orientation is a part of who they are, but it does not define them.

Today we loudly add our voices to the growing chorus of Scouts, Scouters, and parents who urge that the BSA membership criteria be changed on a national level to take sexual orientation out of consideration in the determination of both membership and eligibility for leadership roles. We encourage the BSA to adopt the position of similar organizations such as the Girl Scouts and 4-H -- specifically no position at all.

If this is not acceptable to the governing board, we request that the BSA uphold the right of each unit, as in Exploring, to decide this issue for its own program according to the beliefs of the community it serves.

We ask you to return to the historic principle that chartered organizations and their Scout unit committees should choose the best possible leaders according to their own standards and beliefs. The BSA should not put itself in the place of choosing among the varying views and beliefs espoused by the many religions we serve.

In addition to encouraging a change in national policy, we are writing to you today to state our determination that Cub Scout Pack 345 will not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. We will judge all people on their behavior, integrity, and character. We will carefully screen our adult leaders, choosing the best role models who display traits such as honor, truthfulness, courage, and strength as well as respect for the safety and dignity of others. We will insist that all Scouts and Scouters behave in a manner consistent with the high ethical standards of Scouting, and we will continue to teach and abide by the Scout Oath and Law.

Sincerely,

Michael Conte, Eagle Scout (Troop 76, San Rafael, CA, 1986)
on behalf of the leaders and the parents of Cub Scout Pack 345, San Francisco

Enclosures:
Pack 345 Statement of Non-Discrimination

cc:
Dr. Gregory Zabek, Chartered Representative, Elks Lodge #3, San Francisco
Pastor Todd Arnold, West Portal Lutheran School
Ryan DiBernardo, Director of Field Service, San Francisco Bay Area Council, BSA