

March 15, 2013

Mr. Wayne Brock  
Chief Scout Executive  
Boy Scouts of America  
1325 West Walnut Hill Lane  
P.O. Box 152079  
Irving, Texas 75015-2079



TO THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND TO THE VOTING MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL BOY SCOUT COUNCIL:

I wanted to write you regarding your impending decision to review the values and membership standards of the Boy Scouts of America to include openly homosexual scouts and scout leaders as members.

As you know, churches comprise 70% of the sponsoring agencies for the Boy Scouts of America. Because Christian churches teach both the law of God and the good news of redemption in Christ Jesus, churches and pastors often have seen the Boy Scouts as a good activity for boys as the organization has promoted honor for God, parents, country and in general good and moral behavior. As you are aware, Lutheran congregations comprise the fifth largest group of religious organizations that sponsor Boy Scout activities. The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod has been supportive of our congregations sponsoring the Boy Scouts of America since 1944, when Chief Scout Executive Elbert K. Kretwell wrote: "We recognize that there is no Boy Scout authority which supersedes the authority of the local pastor and the congregation in any phase of the program affecting the spiritual program of the church."

Unfortunately, the proposed change in the Boy Scouts of America policy on values and membership to include openly homosexual scouts and scout leaders impinges and supersedes the authority of the local pastor and of the congregation by promoting and allowing a moral position that our church believes is against the will of God and against the Holy Scriptures. This proposed change to the Boy Scout policy on values and membership will cause a crisis of conscience for church leaders, pastors, parents, and congregations and may force them to consider other alternatives to scouting activities.

This crisis of conscience is not eliminated by allowing the decision of values and membership to remain at the local level, as scouts from troops sponsored by congregations of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod potentially would be interacting with openly homosexual scouts and scout leaders at regional and national scouting activities.

Another challenge for our churches in allowing the decision to remain local rather than national lays in the fact that some communities have larger and more politically active gay and lesbian groups. In these communities, the local Boy Scout Council may impose the acceptance of homosexual scouts and scout leaders upon troops sponsored by the local congregation. Should this occur, the Boy Scouts effectively will have superseded the authority of our church teaching, of the local pastor, and of the congregation- perhaps even placing us in legal jeopardy.

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For over a century, scouting has sought to uphold moral values to a level greater than that of the general society around it. The capitulation to societal pressures now would mar the long and honorable history of the Boy Scouts to honor the natural law of God. The scouting law reflects this God-given natural law.

I hope and pray that the Boy Scouts retains its existing policy and does not change to reflect the society around it. At this crucial moment in Western history, society needs organizations that stand up for what is moral and right.

Thank you for your consideration.

Blessings in Christ,

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SIGNATURE WITHHELD FOR SECURITY REASONS  
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Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, President  
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

C: Mr. Lee Shaw, Jr., Community Alliances Committee Staff Advisor  
Mr. Chip Turner, Religious Relationships Task Force Chairman