



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on May 27, 2013

Boy Scouts' Woes Continue With Assault by Atheists

On the heels of the news that they caved in  to pressure from the homosexual lobby and will allow participation by boys who identify as "gay," the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) are facing a new assault, this time from the nation's organized atheists. On May 24 the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) fired a warning shot over the bow of the BSA concerning the group's requirement that both participants and leaders express faith in God. The godless group applauded the BSA's initial surrender to the demands of homosexual activists, but challenged the scouting organization on its decision to retain a policy that "bars atheist and freethinking members."

The BSA's stated policy concerning faith comes in the form of a declaration that the "recognition of God as the ruling and leading power in the universe and the grateful acknowledgment of His favors and blessings are necessary to the best type of citizenship."

Claiming that one in three teens identifies as non-religious, the FFRF complained that "there's a long trail of boys and leaders who have been kicked out [of the Boy Scouts] simply because they don't believe in a God. They range from a six-year-old in suburban Chicago whose nonreligious father, Elliott Welsh, lost a suit against the BSA for violating the Civil Rights Act, to exemplary Eagle Scout Darrell Lambert, expelled from a Washington troop in a high-profile case."

The FFRF claimed that the Boy Scout ranks "have always been full of nonbelievers," and chided the BSA for lagging "20 years behind the Girl Scouts of America, which announced in 1993 that it would protect the freedom of conscience of all members." The atheist complainers recalled that the Girl Scouts "adopted a resolution that any of its members may substitute another word or phrase for 'God' in its official pledge, a measure enacted to show 'strength in diversity and that we are an inclusive organization.' "

Charging that "no one can grow into the best citizen who discriminates against the nonreligious," the FFRF encouraged its members to hector the BSA with phone calls demanding that it cave in on its foundational conviction that connects faith in God with its mission of raising up boys into responsible men.

The FFRF was apparently riding the coattails of another atheist group, the Secular Coalition for America, which released its own statement affirming the Boy Scouts for their moral collapse, while criticizing them for retaining faith in God as a key value for participation in their ranks. Edwina Rogers, a spokesperson for the secular group, said she was pleased with the BSA's cave-in on the issue of homosexuality, but considered it insufficient. "Discrimination is wrong — whether it's directed at children or adults, atheists or the religious," Rogers said.

She noted that while the BSA is a private organization, it receives federal funding through the use of supplies, space, and equipment. "No organization that discriminates on the basis of religion or religious beliefs should receive federal support," Rogers said, adding in a tone suggestive of ramped up



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legal pressure: “We look forward to a time when the Boy Scouts will be a completely inclusive organization that does not discriminate at all based on religious belief or sexual orientation.”

Meanwhile, homosexual activist groups reacted to the Boy Scouts’ announcement that they would open their doors to gay-identifying boys, while continuing their ban on homosexual Scout leaders. “They’re not on our good list yet,” said the Human Rights Campaign’s Paul Guequierre of the BSA’s partial policy change on gays, adding that “the new policy doesn’t go far enough. Parents and adults of good moral character, regardless of sexual orientation, should be able to volunteer their time to mentor the next generation of Americans.”

Zach Wahls of the pro-homosexual Scouts for Equality, said that his group would continue to pressure the Boy Scouts to allow homosexual adults access to vulnerable boys, while also looking for opportunities to target the Boy Scouts for discrimination against supposedly gay youth. “We’ll act as a watchdog,” Wahls warned. “If any gay youth feel they’re experiencing harassment or discrimination, we want to be there for them.”

Rich Ferraro of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) said his group would continue to pressure corporate donors to stop giving to the Boy Scouts, and predicted that homosexual teens participating in the Boy Scouts would help to undermine the BSA’s remaining moral barriers to homosexuality. “The BSA now will have to look gay teens in the eye,” he said, “boys who’ve been involved in Scouting for years, and tell them they’re not going to be able to grow into adult leaders.” Christian leaders and organizations continue to express their sorrow over the BSA’s decision to allow participation by boys who identify as homosexual. In a statement, the [Assemblies of God](#) denomination noted that a majority of scout groups throughout the nation “are sponsored by churches or other religious entities, which have as their foundation a belief in biblical teachings that identify homosexual behavior as outside of God’s plan for sexuality. While we agree that youths who experience confusion or same-sex attraction need to be welcomed, in our churches they are confronted with this biblical teaching and will be counseled and prayed with that God will help them to align their lives in conformity to that teaching. We agree with the BSA that we need to demonstrate compassion and welcome those who are struggling with sexuality issues, but not in a way that condones such behavior, which is what the new BSA policy does.”

As have many other Christian and conservative leaders, Randy Sharp of the American Family Association said that the decision made by a vote of 61 percent of the BSA’s voting leaders does not bode well for the future of the storied organization. “I think what we’re going to see in the next year or so is a mass exodus of adults and boys from the Boy Scouts of America program,” Sharp told [OneNewsNow.com](#). “Some of the estimates that I’ve heard are up to 400,000 to 500,000 boys and adults will resign their positions with the Boy Scouts of America.”

Rob Schwarzwald of the [Family Research Council](#) pointed out that such a mass exodus will not be based on a personal hatred or animosity toward people who identify as homosexuals. “This isn’t about fear or homophobia, and this isn’t about bigotry,” he said. “This is about the moral values of our Judeo-Christian heritage, which teaches that the only appropriate sexually intimate activity that exists [is] between a man and a woman within marriage. That’s always been the affirmation of Scouts. It is no longer.”

David Cortman of [Alliance Defending Freedom](#) emphasized that “those promoting the agenda to change what the Boy Scouts have always been won’t rest until there is complete acceptance of any sexual preference for both leaders and members. With its decision the BSA has rejected its freedom to promote and practice the values that have served to shape our nation’s boys into leaders for the last century.”



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Photo of statue of Boy Scout in front of the National Scouting Museum in Irving, Texas: AP Images



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