

Current, Past Boy Scouts Urge Group to Keep Gay Member Ban

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) will vote this week on whether or not to allow openly gay members. And moral Americans, including members of current or former Scouting families and former Scouts, are continuing to bang the drum of reason.

Nearly 19,000 Americans signed a petition Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) delivered to the BSA, urging the group to “uphold the values that have defined the organization for over 100 years” and to reject any efforts to change its membership policy.

“The Boy Scouts should once again stand firm on moral principles that have successfully shaped our nation’s boys into leaders for generations,” says senior counsel David Cortman. “This is the expressed desire of thousands of Scouts and their families who have signed this petition. The Constitution protects the Boy Scouts’ freedom to promote the values that have defined the organization and to ensure that its leaders and members adhere to those values.”

The ADF letter accompanying the petition explains that “the best course for BSA—both for the best interest of its members and the defense against legal challenges—is for BSA to maintain its long-standing values-based membership policy.”

The letter also explains that the nearly 19,000 people who signed the petition “have taken the time to let BSA know that they are ready and willing to stand with BSA if it will make the right decision and stand firm on its values and membership policy.”

In March, ADF sent BSA leadership a letter, encouraging the organization to affirm its values and warning that an

inconsistently applied policy nationwide could open the door to lawsuits. The letter explained that activist groups could seize upon an inconsistent policy as supposed evidence that the policy is no longer essential to the Boy Scouts' mission, and local councils and troops could be exposed to individual litigation.

"Boy Scouts of America was founded upon rich and timeless principles. It shouldn't give in to intimidation or abandon its values," adds senior legal counsel Erik Stanley, who is an Eagle Scout. "Its leadership should defend the Scouts' honor and stand strong on the principles that have made the Boy Scouts one of America's most revered institutions."