



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA® SAM HOUSTON AREA COUNCIL

Contact: Lynda Sanders (713) 820 8010; lynda.sanders@scouting.org
For Immediate Release

Local Council Votes To Uphold Current Membership Policy

(Houston, TX – April 29, 2013) Today at a meeting of its Board of Directors, the Sam Houston Area Council voted to support the current national membership policy. This policy does not proactively inquire about the sexual orientation of employees, volunteers, or members, but does not grant membership to individuals who are open or avowed homosexuals or who engage in behavior that would become a distraction to the mission of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA).

After a thorough process of surveying parents, leaders, chartered partners and financial supporters, the Council learned from their constituents that they do not want to change the current national policy on membership standards. Respondents to a Council survey of current parents and adult leaders who expressed an opinion on this issue yielded a 75% opposition to changing the current national membership policy. An independent survey of the Council's parents and leaders conducted by the national BSA organization supported the same conclusion. As a result, the board of the Sam Houston Area Council voted not to support the following proposed resolution on the national membership policy:

Youth membership in the Boy Scouts of America is open to all youth who meet the specific membership requirements to join the Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, Sea Scout, and Venturing programs. Membership in any program of the Boy Scouts of America requires the youth member to (a) subscribe to and abide by the values expressed in the Scout Oath and Scout Law, (b) subscribe to and abide by the precepts of the Declaration of Religious Principle (duty to God), and (c) demonstrate behavior that exemplifies the highest level of good conduct and respect for others and is consistent at all times with the values expressed in the Scout Oath and Scout Law. No youth may be denied membership in the Boy Scouts of America on the basis of sexual orientation or preference alone.

Local councils throughout the country will vote on the proposed resolution at the Boy Scouts of America's national annual business meeting on May 23. The Sam Houston Area Council has 12 voting representatives based on its membership size. An estimated 1400 voting members of the National Council of the BSA will participate in the vote.

"We have had an open and respectful discussion with regard to the various points of view on this complex issue. The Council will, as it always has, support and implement all policies of the Boy Scouts of America, regardless of the outcome of the upcoming vote," stated Rodney W. Eads, Chairman of the Board.

The Sam Houston Area Council, through its chartered partner organizations, serves nearly 50,000 youth in the Scouting programs and nearly 20,000 volunteers. The Council will continue its focus on helping our youth to become strong leaders with good character who will continue to serve others. ###