



## UPS Drops Boy Scout Funding Over Ban on Homosexual Leaders

United Parcel Service (UPS) said earlier this month that it would [stop giving money to the Boy Scouts of America](#) because of the group's decision to continue its longtime policy of prohibiting homosexuals from serving as Scout leaders. UPS pulled the plug on the Boy Scouts in response to an online petition drive posted at [Change.org](#) that attracted some 80,000 signatures pressuring the company to stop its funding. The petition drive was launched by former Eagle Scout Zach Wahls, who has been pursuing an aggressive campaign against the Boy Scouts over the group's position on homosexual Scout leaders. Wahls was behind an earlier campaign targeting [computer chip manufacturer Intel's Scout funding](#), and has also mounted a similar drive against [Verizon](#).



Wahls, who was raised by his lesbian mother and her "partner," founded [Scouts for Equality](#) as a vehicle for his anti-Boy Scout activism. "UPS showed true bravery today in standing with the 80,000 Americans, including thousands of Scouts and Scout leaders, who oppose the Boy Scouts' hurtful anti-gay policy," Wahls said in a statement following UPS' concession to his petition drive. "That bravery is what Scouting is all about. Corporate America gets it better than most: policies that discriminate aren't simply wrong, they're bad for business and they're hurting the Scouting community."

The [Atlanta Business Chronicle](#) reported that UPS had confirmed its policy change, which was reiterated in the following statement on the [company's website](#): "The UPS Foundation seeks to support organizations that are in alignment with our focus areas, guidelines, and non-discrimination policy. UPS and the UPS Foundation do not discriminate against any person or organization with regard to categories protected by applicable law, as well as other categories protected by UPS and the UPS Foundation in our own policies. These include, but are not limited to race, gender, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran or military status, pregnancy, age, and religion." Deron Smith, a spokesman for the Boy Scouts of America, noted that UPS' decision will most adversely impact the young men the organization seeks to serve. "These types of contributions go directly to serving young people in local councils and this decision will negatively impact youth," he said. "Through 110,000 units, scouting represents millions of youth and adult members in diverse communities across the nation, each with a variety of beliefs on this topic."

At least one aggressive "gay" activist group, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), sees that negative impact as a way to pressure groups such as the Boy Scouts to knuckle under to the high-pressure normalization of homosexual behavior in American culture. "The time is now for the BSA to end this outdated and unpopular ban before other corporate funders pull dollars and scouting



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families drop their support,” exhorted GLAAD spokesperson Herndon Graddick. “All of the great work that the BSA does to help young people will continue to be overshadowed by their blatant discrimination until they join other inclusive organizations like the Girl Scouts of the USA and the 4-H Club.”

Graddick was referring to the Boy Scouts’ decision earlier this year to [continue its 100-year ban](#) on allowing homosexuals to serve as leaders of the boys under its guidance. The decision came after a two-year internal review of the policy, and amid extreme pressure to change from outside sources such as Wahls and his group, and even [GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney](#), who maintained that while he supported “the right of the Boy Scouts of America to decide what it wants to do on that issue,” he also felt that “all people should be able to participate in the Boy Scouts regardless of their sexual orientation.”

Romney’s position mirrored that of his presidential opponent Barack Obama, whose office issued a statement August 8 saying that while “the president believes the Boy Scouts is a valuable organization that has helped educate and build character in American boys for more than a century,” he nonetheless “opposes this policy that discriminates on the basis of sexual orientation.”

Despite such opinions, in mid-July the Boy Scouts of America announced that it would continue with its policy of disallowing avowed homosexuals to serve as scout leaders. “The vast majority of the parents of youth we serve value their rights to address issues of same-sex orientation within their family, with spiritual advisers, and at the appropriate time and in the right setting,” explained Bob Mazzuca, the Boy Scouts chief executive, in a prepared announcement about the decision. “While a majority of our membership agrees with our policy, we fully understand that no single policy will accommodate the many diverse views among our membership or society.”

While even some members of the Boy Scouts’ executive board had expressed their desire to see the policy changed, the organization decided — for the time being, at least — to stay the organization’s positive moral course. “Scouting believes that good people can personally disagree on this topic and still work together to achieve the life-changing benefits to youth through Scouting,” the BSA said in a statement concerning the internal disagreement. “While not all board members may personally agree with this policy ... BSA leadership agrees this is the best policy for the organization.”

Longtime members and supporters of the Boy Scouts noted that its policy barring homosexuals is closely connected to the official [Boy Scout Oath](#), which requires that the conduct of the group’s members — as well as its leaders — remain “morally straight.” In 2000, the [U.S. Supreme Court affirmed](#) that the Boy Scouts of America was within its rights to maintain its proscription against homosexual Scout leaders. The High Court noted that enforcing traditional moral values was crucial to the organization’s “expressive message,” and to compel it to include homosexual leaders would violate its longtime values. Writing for the 5-4 majority in the case, Chief Justice William Rehnquist explained: “Forcing a group to accept certain members may impair the ability of the group to express those views and only those views, it intends to express.”

While UPS’ re-written policy on its giving will preclude the Boy Scouts and other groups clinging to traditional values, the company will continue to fund such pro-homosexual groups as the Human Rights Campaign, which, according to the [Biblically Responsible Investment Institute](#), has received some \$400,000 in funding from UPS. Not surprisingly, the Human Rights Campaign has dutifully [given UPS stellar marks](#) in its report of the nation’s most “gay” friendly companies. (Compare UPS’ score with that of [Chick-fil-A](#).)

“UPS should be careful whom they support with money that belongs to all the shareholders,” commented Thomas Strobhar of the [Corporate Morality Action Center](#). “The Boys Scouts are a national



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treasure with legitimate interests regarding the safety of the scouts, while the Human Rights Campaign has contributed greatly to a lack of civility in public discourse.”



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