



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Statement of NYS Senator Hoylman on Continued Discrimination by Boy Scouts of America

BRAD HOYLMAN April 19, 2013

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New York, NY (April 19, 2013) —Today, the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) released its proposed revision to the Membership Standards Resolution, which, if approved, would end the organization's ban on gay youths but would maintain its exclusion of gay and lesbian adult leaders.

As the only openly-gay New York State Senator and as an Eagle Scout (Troop 70, Lewisburg, WV), I am dismayed by BSA's continued failure to remove all barriers to participation in its organization based on sexual orientation. If adopted, the organization's latest proposal would maintain the ban on gay and lesbian adult leaders.

It seems inconceivable that an organization that aims to prepare the next generation of leaders would allow youth to train as part of its program, but deny them the opportunity to serve as leaders once adults.

I strongly believe that BSA is obliged by the Constitution of the United States, longstanding state and local anti-discrimination laws and the Scout Law itself to categorically end its policy of bigotry toward gays and lesbians.

BSA is one of the last major American institutions to maintain such a policy. It lags far behind such youth organizations as the Girl Scouts of America, the Future Farmers of America, Rotary Interact and the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, as well as the U.S. Armed Forces, and the opinion of the majority of Americans.

Moreover, this stigma is particularly harmful to young people, reinforcing and legitimizing the bullying and alienation of our children that has led to tragic consequences. To be on the right side of history, BSA must immediately open its membership and, crucially, leadership to all people, regardless of sexual orientation.