GAVIN NEWSOM
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

November 12, 2012

Wayne M. Perry, President
National Boy Scouts of America Foundation
1325 W. Walnut Hill Ln.
Irving, Texas 75015-2079

Dear Mr. Perry,

I am writing in support of Ryan Andresen, an 18-year-old Boy Scout from Moraga, California, who was recently denied the rank of Eagle Scout because of his sexual orientation. A rank he has earned with honor and dedication.

Ryan should be commended for his 12 years of participation in Scouting, his excellent service to his community, and his incredible effort to combat bullying in his Boy Scout troop and in his school. The state of California is proud of him. I am proud of him.

As a nation, we are toppling discrimination in every facet of society. We are voting for and approving equal marriage at the ballot box. We are ending the dangerous practice of ex-gay therapy. We're seeing more and more companies extend benefits and protections to LGBT employees.

In defending this hurtful and discriminatory policy barring gay youth and leaders, the Boy Scouts of America are simply standing on the wrong side of history. And in doing so, the Boy Scouts are hurting the very people that it aims to serve: the young men who participate in your programs.

In advocating for his Eagle Scout badge, Ryan has demonstrated some of the basic scouting principles such as bravery, honesty and trustworthiness. In denying his badge, a generation of scouts are receiving the message that courage and honesty are only valued if they do not challenge the status quo.

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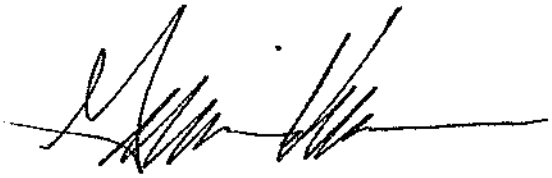
As a former Weeblo scout, I am encouraged by the change happening within the Scouting community. Two members of the National Board, AT&T's Randall Stephenson and Ernst & Young's James Turley, have committed to helping end the anti-gay policy. Large corporate donors, Intel and UPS, have decided to withhold funding until the Boy Scouts end anti-gay policies. And local councils across the nation, such as Minnesota's Northern Star Council and Massachusetts Minutemen Council, have outright rejected the national policy by adopting inclusive member and leader policies.

Scout leaders who are speaking out against this hurtful policy inspire me. I urge the Mt. Diablo Silverado Council to follow the brave precedent established by other local councils by ending anti-discriminatory practices and approve the Eagle Scout award Ryan so justly deserves.

Sincerely,



Gavin Newsom
Lieutenant Governor of California