

Pro-Life Organizations Boycott Girl Scout Cookies

Tom Johnson February 26, 2014



Several pro-life groups are calling for a boycott of Girl Scout Cookies in 2014, contending that the Girl Scouts of the USA maintains ties to pro-choice proponents and associations that promote abortion rights.

([Newswire.net](http://www.newswire.net) -- February 26, 2014) Augusta, Maine -- The group Pro-Life Waco has launched a Girl Scout Cookie boycott -- which it calls "Cookiecott 2014" -- as it claims that Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) advocates for abortion rights. However, according to Kelly Parisi, the Girl Scouts' spokeswoman, this organization takes no political stands.

What sparked this boycott? Pro-Life Waco leader John Pisciotta learned of a December 2013 post on the GSUSA Twitter page: a retweet with a link to a Huffington Post live chat. This chat's participants discussed the candidates for a 2013 Woman of the Year honor. One of those contenders was Wendy Davis, the Texas state senator who famously filibustered a bill that restricted abortion access. Interpreting this retweet as a tacit endorsement of Davis and her views, Pisciotta decided to take action. Other pro-life groups, among them the news service LifeNews.com and the Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute, have since sanctioned this boycott.

The Girl Scouts have drawn Pisciotta's attention before. In 2004, a local Scout council announced that they would participate in an event that included representatives of Planned Parenthood. Pisciotta called for a boycott of that council's cookies that year, a boycott that he kept up even after the Girl Scouts opted not to attend the event after all.

Also in 2004, Kathy Cloninger, the CEO of GSUSA at the time, said in an interview on NBC's "Today" that Girl Scout councils across the U.S. allow Planned Parenthood chapters to provide Scouts with information related to sexuality. Cloninger went on to make a similar statement in an interview at Harvard University in 2007. Further, the Catholic News Agency argues that many GSUSA leaders and board members are [abortion rights advocates](#). In fact, Parisi once worked in the communications department of the Ms. Foundation for Women, a group that espouses pro-choice positions.

Parisi asserts that the GSUSA's Huffington Post retweet was merely intended to provide Scouts with an opportunity to consider whom they would add to that list of Woman of the Year candidates. In addition, the GSUSA website states that the group is not affiliated with Planned Parenthood and does not promote any specific viewpoints with regards to sexuality and abortion. And Parisi explains that each GSUSA council is effectively a separate organization. Even so, she adds, council leaders always leave it to parents to discuss issues of politics and sexuality with their daughters.

In all of this, it's unclear if a Girl Scout Cookie boycott represents wise strategy for abortion opponents. It could backfire: Cookiecott 2014 might disgust people who don't want the abortion debate to involve young girls, and a backlash could result in increased sales for the Scouts.

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Source: <http://www.newswire.net/newsroom/pr/00080413-prolife-girl-scout-boycott.html>