



Agenda Item Identification Code
(For National Board Office only):

Girl Scouts of the USA
420 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10018-2798

Agenda Item Submission Form 58th National Council Session

Name of Girl Scout Council(s)

Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana

City

State

Chicago

IL

If a group of councils is submitting a single agenda item, all councils must be listed on this form.

Is this council(s) submitting a Discussion Topic or ☒ Proposal?

Is this a ☐ draft or a ☒ final submission?

Write the following information exactly as the council wishes it to appear in the *Workbook* if accepted for the agenda.

TITLE OF PROPOSAL OR DISCUSSION TOPIC

SPIRITUALITY & GSUSA

STATEMENT OF PROPOSAL OR DISCUSSION TOPIC, QUESTION, OR ISSUE

(Proposals should be written in the form of a motion)

TOPIC, QUESTION, OR ISSUE

or

THAT

or

TO

THAT the Preamble of the Constitution of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America be amended to reflect the following updates to the Promise, Beliefs and Principles, and Spiritual Force:

We propose the following changes to the Girl Scout Constitution in the Blue Book;

PROMISE

On my honor, I will try:

~~To serve God and my country,~~

To serve my local and global community.

To help people at all times,

And to live by the Girl Scout Law.

BELIEFS AND PRINCIPLES

We, the members of Girl Scouts of the United States of America, united by a belief in God altruism, hold that the Girl Scout Promise and Law is the cornerstone of our Movement.

SPIRITUAL FORCE

The motivating force in Girl Scouting is spiritual, which can be connected to faith or personal growth. The ways in which members identify and fulfill their spiritual beliefs are personal and private.

Proviso: This change would take effect with the 2028 Membership Year. Blue Book Policies will be updated to reflect the changes within the amendment.

REASONS:

1. What is the issue the discussion topic or proposal is trying to address?
2. Are there other ways to address this issue?
3. How does this proposal improve Movement governance or policy? OR How does this discussion topic inform Movement strategy?
4. Does this agenda item have Movement-wide significance? Does it apply to all councils?
5. Is this agenda item time-sensitive? What happens if it is not addressed at NCS 58?

As membership numbers decline and fees rise, it is more important than ever to ensure that every potential member feels a sense of belonging in Girl Scouts.

From its inception, Juliette Gordon Low welcomed girls from all backgrounds—regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or religion—into Girl Scouts. Inclusivity has always been a core value, and in honor of her vision, we must amend our constitution to reflect language that embraces every member—past, present, and future.

In an increasingly connected world, we must also strengthen our commitment to our global community, recognizing Girl Scouts abroad, our sister organizations within WAGGGS, and our shared dedication to altruism on an international scale.

PROMISE

The cornerstone of the Girl Scout Movement is the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Every gathering, from troop meetings to National Council Sessions, begins with a public recitation of these words. They must reflect the mission and values that unite us, ensuring every member feels proud to say them aloud.

Currently, the Girl Scout Promise includes language that evokes specific religious beliefs, even as we acknowledge that not all members may choose to use the word “God.” However, remaining silent is also a statement. This contradicts the Preamble’s Spiritual Force section, which asserts that “the ways in which members identify and fulfill their spiritual beliefs are personal and private.”

We propose amending this line to emphasize service to both local and global communities, allowing each member to define this in their own way—whether through their school, neighborhood, or place of worship. A promise “to serve my local and global community” reinforces that Girl Scouts help others not for material reward, but because it is the right thing to do. Our service reflects a commitment to connection, meaning, and purpose in daily life.

Acknowledging our global community is more relevant than ever, as technology and shared challenges increasingly bring us together. Additionally, the proposed wording honors the Founders’ deep reverence, paying tribute to something greater than oneself.

To maintain membership, WAGGGS requires all organizations to obtain WAGGGS approval when amending their Promise and/or Law. We don't anticipate opposition to the proposed language as it is similar to updates seen in other member states, such as Finland and Australia.

BELIEFS AND PRINCIPLES

Currently, the Beliefs and Principles section of our Constitution states that Girl Scouts are "united by a belief in God." However, this directly contradicts the Blue Book Policy on Spirituality/Religion, which affirms that Girl Scouts "look to individual members to establish for themselves the nature of their spiritual beliefs." For some, this wording may feel more divisive than unifying.

This proposal aims to highlight what truly unifies all Girl Scouts - our sense of altruism, which is defined as selfless concern for the well-being of others, often expressed through acts of kindness, generosity, and service without expecting personal gain.

SPIRITUAL FORCE

Spirituality is mentioned within the preamble of our constitution under the section Spiritual Force. Adding additional context that spirituality can be religious or be applied to one's personal growth better embodies the intent of Girl Scouts as a welcoming place for all.

We propose adding context to clarify that the commonly held definition of spirituality has expanded to encompass belief in a higher power, self-discovery, inner peace, and a sense of purpose beyond material success. While religious faith remains a foundational aspect of the Movement, it should be recognized as a deeply personal value unique to each member. Girl Scouts will continue to offer awards and programs that support and celebrate these diverse paths of self-discovery, should a Girl Scout choose to pursue them.

ELEVATING GIRL SCOUTS

Updating our Constitution will provide a powerful platform to showcase our values, mission, and dedication to inclusivity. This builds on our recent organizational commitment to DEI-RJ, which passed with over two thirds votes at the 2023 National Council Session. This significant change to our Promise, the first in over three decades, will shift the public narrative beyond routine news of cookies and dues increases. A change of this magnitude will highlight our true purpose and welcome a broader community to our organization.

CONCLUSION

Girl Scouts serve friends, family, fellow members, and even strangers across the world, guided by a deep reverence for all who share this planet. Our motivation is spiritual rather than religious, and our Constitution should reflect this distinction. To truly build girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place, we must ensure that every Girl Scout feels welcomed, valued, and empowered to embrace this mission. These proposed changes to our Constitution are essential to upholding that commitment.

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR PROPOSALS

Indicate the projected expenditure and impact on resources for councils and the national organization, for a five (5) year period.

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Budgetary implications for this change will vary based on existing GSUSA vendor agreements and legacy inventory. To maximize resource efficiency, we recommend prioritizing digital 'print-on-demand' materials over costly pre-printed resources.

By strategically implementing this change nationally and engaging the media, Girl Scouts will achieve substantial brand elevation and resolve persistent marketplace confusion. This presents local councils with a powerful opportunity to expand membership and volunteer bases, secure impactful corporate partnerships, and diversify revenue and program offerings.



Jackie Barlow

5.30.2025

Signature and Printed Name of chair, council board of directors

Date of council board meeting

Open Comment and Collaboration Period: April 7-May 14, 2025

To submit for Open Comment and Collaboration, completed forms must be emailed to BoardOffice@girlscouts.org, copying abeck@girlscouts.org, with subject line: Draft Agenda Item from [INSERT COUNCIL(S)].

Final Submission Deadline: May 30, 2025

Final submissions, signed off by your council(s) board chair must be emailed to BoardOffice@girlscouts.org, copying abeck@girlscouts.org, with the subject line: Final Agenda Item from [INSERT COUNCIL(S)].

Please note that if a group of councils is submitting a single agenda item, the submission form should be signed by each council's board chair.

If additional space is needed, please attach a separate page.