

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact:**

**Chuck Smith, Deputy Director**

**Equality Texas**

**Office: 512-474-5475**

**Cell: 512-294-3506**

### **Governor Perry Preoccupied With Sex; Misses the Point of Scouting**

#### **Equality Texas Invites Gay Former Scouts to Attend Perry's Book-Readings This Week**

**Austin, Texas - (February 25, 2008)** – In an interview with Deborah Solomon in yesterday's *The New York Times Magazine*, Texas Governor Rick Perry continued his preoccupation with sex, asserting that allowing gays in the Boy Scouts of America would subject boys to "a crash course in sexual orientation". When asked why he supports efforts to keep gays out of the Scouts, Perry said, "I am pretty clear about this one. Scouting ought to be about building character, not about sex. Period. Precious few parents enroll their boys in the Scouts to get a crash course in sexual orientation." When asked whether he believed that gay youth might also be interested in the character-building aspects of scouting, Perry replied, "The argument that gets made is that homosexuality is about sex."

#### **Statement of Paul Scott, Executive Director of Equality Texas**

"The Boy Scouts of America are, indeed, about building character. Governor Perry seems to be the one confused that being gay is just about sex. He fails to realize that the characteristics of being a Scout – trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent are all characteristics that can define a gay Scout member or a gay Scout leader. No one is advocating for Scout leaders to teach a course in sexual orientation, but that they be allowed to serve in order to help build character and integrity.

Discrimination against someone because of their sexual orientation is clearly not character building, and implying that being gay is a defect in character is inaccurate and offensive. Governor Perry's perpetuation of stereotypes and falsehoods is the complete antithesis of good character.

This obsession and preoccupation with sex by Governor Perry is blinding him to the reality that gay Scout members and potential scout leaders possess the qualities necessary to make a good Scout Leader. This fear and ignorance is harmful and prevents the Boy Scouts of America from truly fulfilling its mission."

Equality Texas invites gay Boy Scouts, and gay former Boy Scouts to attend Governor Perry's book-readings across the state to demonstrate to the governor that the principles of scouting are beneficial to heterosexual and homosexual Texans.

#### ***Tuesday, February 26th at 7:30 pm - San Antonio***

*Borders Books*

Heubner Oaks Center

11745 IH-10 West, Suite 110

#### ***Wednesday, February 27th at 7:00 pm - Austin***

*BookPeople*

603 N. Lamar Blvd

#### ***Thursday, February 28th at 7:30 pm - Dallas***

*Borders Books*

Preston Oaks Shopping Center

10720 Preston Road, Suite 1018

*Equality Texas works toward the elimination of social, legal, and economic discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression through lobbying, education, and research directed toward the Texas Legislature and other state governmental agencies.*

*Atticus Circle educates and mobilizes fair-minded straight people to advance equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender partners, parents, and their children.*