

Girl Scouts Uniforms Will Continue To Be U.S.-Made

Samantha Henry, Associated Press

NEWARK, New Jersey (AP) — The Girl Scouts of the USA announced Monday its uniforms will continue to be made in America following a public uproar over reports it was considering bids from China or other overseas manufacturers.

The owners of a family-run Passaic, New Jersey, factory that has been the main supplier of Girl Scout uniforms and sashes for years were told recently that the organization would be seeking bids for the job — including from a company in China.

Girl Scouts spokeswoman Michelle Tompkins said the organization, which has its national headquarters in New York City, had been contacted by parents, members and volunteers urging it to keep the uniforms American-made. She said the contract hadn't been awarded but the bid request had been modified to require that the uniforms be made domestically and that companies adhere to strict guidelines regarding worker age, treatment and safety.

"We thank the many Girl Scout parents and volunteers who stood up for their beliefs and showed our 2.4 million girls that every voice makes a difference," Tompkins said. "They are the role models who help build girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place."

The announcement was welcomed by the owners of the Jackie Evans Inc. factory, which has been the main supplier for Girl Scouts uniforms for nearly a decade.

"That's great that they're doing that," said Mario Monaco, who works alongside his father and brother in the business. "We wanted to keep jobs in the United States and keep jobs in Passaic. Now we have to see what happens."

Monaco said the family would be submitting a bid and hoped the process would be fair and transparent.

In a story first published last week in Woodland Park's Herald News newspaper, the owners of the factory said the loss of its sole client could mean layoffs for its more than 90 workers and could force it to close.

Girl Scouts of the USA calls itself the world's pre-eminent organization dedicated solely to girls. It says it helps girls build character, values and leadership skills for success in the real world.

Since the Girl Scouts organization was founded in 1912, it has grown from 18 members in Savannah, Georgia, to 3.4 million members throughout the United

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States, U.S. territories and more than 90 countries worldwide, its website says.

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