



October 7, 2013

Honorable Senator Maria Cantwell
Chairwoman,
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
United States Senate
838 Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Senator John Barrasso
Ranking Member,
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
United States Senate
838 Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Cantwell and Barrasso:

The NAFOA Board of Directors voted unanimously on September 8, 2013 to fully support and commend the efforts of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (SCIA) to discontinue the use of the term 'Redskins' by the Washington D.C. NFL franchise and any news organization. It is especially important that the leadership of the SCIA makes a unified and strong stand on behalf of the Indian people they represent. In addition, we wholeheartedly support any effort made by committee members of the SCIA to terminate the trademark of the Washington Redskins.

Native Americans widely hold that the term 'Redskin' can be traced back to the 1755 Phips Proclamation. This genocidal policy, introduced by the colonial government of Massachusetts, not only sanctioned the killing of Penobscot Indians but offered a bounty for every Indian scalp referred to as a 'Redskin.' Since the eighteenth century the term 'Redskin' has continued to be perceived as a highly derogative, racist slur against an entire ethnic group.

It is therefore deeply disturbing to the Native American community that the Washington D.C. NFL franchise continues with its unabated use of the 'Redskins' name. While NAFOA adamantly opposes the use of this pejorative term in any context, its use by a sports franchise which represents the nation's capital is an unreserved embarrassment and should be rectified as soon as possible.

NAFOA is a national organization representing tribal governments in the advancement of independent tribal economies and culturally-vibrant American Indian and Alaska Native communities. In order for tribes to thrive, the placement of our Indian peoples in the public domain should be honored and not disparaged.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Lomax". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bill" being particularly prominent.

Bill Lomax
President, NAFOA