



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oneida Indian Nation Praises D.C. Council for Taking Strong Stand Against Offensive Name of Washington's NFL Team

ONEIDA NATION HOMELANDS (NY) (November 5, 2013) The Oneida Indian Nation today praised the Council of the District of Columbia for passing a resolution condemning the ongoing use of what it termed a “racist and derogatory” word for the name and mascot of Washington’s NFL team.

The resolution passed unanimously, with one member voting present, despite reported efforts by the Washington team to mobilize their supporters in opposition.

Introduced by Councilmember At-Large David Grosso, the resolution calls on Washington team owner Dan Snyder to drop the R-word name, saying it is the “right and prudent thing to do in this case.” The resolution concludes: “The owner of the Washington NFL team is hereby urged to change the name of the football team to a name that is not offensive to Native Americans or any other ethnic group.”

Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter stated: “With its vote today, the D.C. Council has placed itself firmly on the side of those who believe there should be no place for institutionalized racism within the National Football League. This Council resolution is yet

another call for Washington's team owner to do the right thing by halting the callous use of the R-word and moving the team in a positive direction away from its past legacy of racial bigotry.”

Civil rights organizations, religious leaders, Native American governments and groups, Members of Congress from both parties and even the President of the United States have said what should be obvious: the league's continued marketing and promotion of a dictionary-defined racial slur should end.

Remarkably, the D.C. Council, Washington's own representative to Congress, the Editorial Board of The Washington Post and a number of the newspaper's columnists, have all taken strong stands against the hometown team's refusal to stop using the R-word.

During a meeting last week with the NFL, the Oneida Indian Nation requested the opportunity to address all NFL team owners during the events surrounding the Super Bowl in February and NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell was invited to visit the tribe's homelands. The Oneida Indian Nation asked Goodell to amend the league bylaws to prohibit the league from naming teams with racial slurs and requested that the Commissioner use his power to refer Washington team owner Dan Snyder for possible sanctions for promoting a slur that is “detrimental to the welfare” of the NFL's image.

Today's Council resolution in D.C. comes as the national Change the Mascot Campaign, led by the Oneida Nation, is preparing to air radio advertisements in Minnesota against the R-word. Throughout the football season, Change the Mascot has run ads in every city where Washington's team has played.

Minnesota Congresswoman Betty McCollum has been an outspoken opponent of the Washington's football team name. At a symposium held in Washington last month timed to coincide with the NFL fall meeting, she and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton of D.C. called upon the NFL and Washington's team owner to change the name.

Last month, two of the country's leading Native American membership organizations, the National Congress of American Indians and the United South and Eastern Tribes both passed resolutions calling for an end to the name.

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