



September 12, 2013

**The Honorable Senator Maria Cantwell  
United States Senate & Chair of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee**

**RE: Opposing the Continued Use of *Washington Red Skins* to Objectify & Denigrate American Indians**

Aaron A. Payment, MPA

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Tribal Chairperson**

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'Aaron Payment'

**Dear Senator Cantwell,**

I write this letter as the Chairperson of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and as a doctoral candidate (ABD) in Educational Leadership in strong opposition to the continued use of Indian Mascots in general and the Washington Redskins in particular for the psychological damage this practice has on American Indian children.

My Tribe is a Federally recognized Tribe, organized under the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 with a Membership population exceeding 40,000 making the "Sault Tribe" the largest Tribe East of the Mississippi. My Tribe has joined forces with the United Tribes of Michigan to address issues of common concern and is committed to joining forces to advance, protect, preserve and enhance the mutual interests, treaty rights, sovereignty, and cultural way of life of the Michigan Tribes throughout the next seven generations. The Sault Tribe accepts the mission to engage, as a matter of mutual concern, issues that impact the health, security, safety, and general welfare of Native Americans.

The derogatory term "redskins" has been used to degrade and diminish Native People throughout the history of the United States. This has been documented in study after study and by the personal experiences of Native People in Indian Country and beyond. The negative effects on our children and our Native communities are long-lasting and detrimental to the positive self-esteem necessary to maintain the high quality of life that is the goal of thoughtful people everywhere.

The term "redskins" is a part of several registered trademarks that are protected under current US Law. It is unconscionable to allow this protection under the law to continue. Congressman Faleomavaega, along with several original sponsors, have introduced HR 1278 which would change the trademark law to disallow the use of "redskins" in a registered trademark in the United States.

As a Member of the United Tribes of Michigan and as Chairperson of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, I support *The Non-disparagement of Native American Persons or Peoples in Trademark Registration Act of 2013* currently introduced in the US House of Representatives as HR 1278. Additionally, I support any effort in addition to the above to stop this racist practice.

**Sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aaron A. Payment".

**Aaron A. Payment, MPA**