



## **Change the Mascot!**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Oneida Indian Nation Congratulates Washington Cornerback DeAngelo Hall for Calling on his NFL Team to Change Its Name**

ONEIDA NATION HOMELANDS (NY) (January 16, 2014) The Oneida Indian Nation today praised Washington cornerback DeAngelo Hall for saying that the NFL team he plays for should change its name from the dictionary-defined R-word. “I think eventually they will change it,” he said during an appearance on FOX Sports’ “Keeping It Real With Mike Hill. “They probably should, but they won’t for a while at least,” said Hall.

“With his comments today DeAngelo Hall has become the first current Washington player to state the obvious, which is that the team should change its name and mascot to something other than a dictionary-defined racial slur that denigrates Native Americans,” said Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter. “On behalf of the Oneida Nation’s Change the Mascot campaign I would like to congratulate DeAngelo Hall for having the moral courage to speak out against injustice. Hall joins an ever-expanding group who has spoken out against the Washington team’s continued use of the R-word, including public health experts, civil rights groups, editorial boards, city councils, sports-industry icons, leading members of Congress from both parties, and the President of the United States.”

Halbritter added: “DeAngelo Hall has set a fine example for his teammates and others in the NFL by placing himself on the right side of history. Hopefully others in the NFL, including Washington’s owner Dan Snyder and the league’s leadership will finally decide to step forward and do the right thing.”

Hall is not the first NFL player to urge a name change for Washington's team. Earlier this season, former Washington player and Hall of Famer Art Monk said the NFL franchise should consider dropping the R-word brand.

Former Minnesota Vikings safety Joey Browner spoke out very strongly against the Washington team name, saying: "It should be changed." He added: "I want to show that I'm indigenous and I want to show a conscious awareness to the world. We need to change the imagery presented to our children."

The comments from DeAngelo Hall come on the same day the Oneida Indian Nation released a radio ad featuring Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.) in which she asserts that Martin Luther King, Jr. would demand an end to the Washington NFL team's name. The radio spot is set to run over Martin Luther King, Jr. Day weekend in Washington, D.C., as well as in Denver and Seattle, the sites of the NFL's conference championship games.

The Change the Mascot campaign's radio ads have aired throughout the current NFL season in Washington and every city in which the team has played. You can learn more about the campaign and download the new ad at [www.changethemascot.org](http://www.changethemascot.org)

To listen to the new radio ad, titled, "Civil Rights," [click here](#).

The full text of the "Civil Rights" ad:

CONGRESSWOMAN HOLMES NORTON: "Hello, I am Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton. It is my privilege to represent the residents of the District of Columbia.

The residents of the capital of our nation have always tried to set an example for tolerance and mutual respect. Yet the current name of our NFL football team stands in stark contrast to these values. Many of our residents, like me, were part of the civil rights movement or identify strongly with its goals and philosophy. We recognize that the Change the Mascot campaign to end the use of the "R-word" is both a moral and civil rights issue in keeping with our city's respect for the dignity of all people.

We have no doubt that if Martin Luther King Jr. could speak today, he would lend his support to the current efforts of our Native American brothers and sisters. We know from our history as African Americans in this country that offensive terms not only should, but can, be cast aside if we do not retreat into silence.

The Washington football team should change the mascot and make the name of our team a source of pride that honors D.C.'s tradition of respect for all Americans."

VOICEOVER: Paid for by the Oneida Indian Nation of New York.

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