



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oneida Nation Praises Maryland Gubernatorial Candidates for Speaking Out Against R-Word Mascot of Washington NFL Team

ONEIDA NATION HOMELANDS (NY) (February 21, 2014) In a significant development today, candidates running for governor of Maryland have criticized the name of their hometown NFL team name and called upon the franchise's ownership to make a change. The momentous statements are being applauded by the Oneida Indian Nation, leader of the growing nationwide [Change the Mascot](#) campaign.

"I think it's an inappropriate name for any team, and I hope ownership will consider changing it," said Lt. Gov. Anthony G. Brown in an article from the Washington Post today. Brown lives in the county where the Washington team plays its home games.*

Candidate Del. Heather R. Mizeur also stated in the piece that she finds the R-word name "offensive and culturally insensitive."*

“It’s incredibly heartening to see Maryland’s gubernatorial candidates united in opposition to this derogatory name that offends and degrades Native peoples,” said Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter. “We sincerely thank these leaders for their courageous stand, pointing out that this offensive slur should be immediately relegated to the dustbin of history by the NFL and the team's owner Dan Snyder.”

Mizeur and Brown now join a diverse and powerful group of lawmakers from both sides of the aisle who have called for a name change from the Washington team. Leading, bipartisan members of Congress have spoken out against the use of the offensive R-word, along with President Obama.

Political and educational leaders at the state level have also been united in demanding a shift. The Council of the District of Columbia unanimously passed a resolution calling the name "derogatory and racist" and urging the team to change its mascot. Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton publicly stated that he believes the name should be changed, and the Houston school board gave preliminary approval on a policy that would ban the use of the dictionary-defined R-word slur.

A growing national movement, the Oneida Indian Nation’s Change the Mascot campaign has also summoned support from Native American tribes, sports icons, leading journalists and top civil rights organizations.

*Washington Post, 2/21/14, Redskins or a new team name? Democrats running for governor in Maryland weigh in. www.washingtonpost.com/local/md-politics/gansler-says-he-is-sympathetic-to-calls-to-change-redskins-name-but-sees-both-sides/2014/02/20/5d022852-9a2e-11e3-80ac-63a8ba7f7942_story.html

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