



National
Caucus of
Native
American
State
Legislators

c/o National Conference
of State Legislatures

7700 East First Place
Denver, Colorado, 80230
303.364.7700
Fax: 303.364.7800
www.nativeamericanlegislators.org

NATIONAL CAUCUS OF NATIVE AMERICAN STATE LEGISLATORS

RESOLUTION DEMANDING THE END OF HARMFUL NATIVE AMERICAN MASCOTS AND DEROGATORY NAMES

The National Caucus of Native American State Legislators (NCNASL) is made up of American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian State Legislators from 17 states and is organized to provide a forum for discussion, education and increased communication. Additionally, the NCNASL identifies and proposes legislation and administrative actions to eliminate barriers to achievement of a better quality of life for Native people.

WHEREAS the National Caucus of Native American State Legislators was formed in 1992 and formally established in its current form in 2005, with the goals of increasing awareness of the diverse Native American cultures in the United States, encouraging open dialogues, understanding, and cooperation between state and Indian nation governments; and

WHEREAS the National Caucus of Native American State Legislators has long sought to promote cultural understanding between American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian peoples and all other cultural traditions through recognition of the many contributions of minority cultures; and

WHEREAS the use of “Native American” sports mascots, logos, or symbols perpetuates stereotypes of American Indians that are very harmful. The “warrior savage” myth has plagued this country’s relationships with the Indian people, as it reinforces the racist view that Indians are uncivilized and uneducated and it has been used to justify policies of forced assimilation and destruction of Indian culture; and

WHEREAS harmful and offensive stereotypes, names, words or phrases can also be used on geographical feature within states; and

WHEREAS, sports teams with “Indian” logos represent Native Americans as archaic stereotypes when Native Americans are members of and contributors to contemporary

society, and two-thirds or over 2,000 of such “Indian” references in sports have been eliminated during the past 35 years. The stereotypes of uneducated warrior savages can lead to discrimination against American Indians who are seeking jobs in fields that require education and sophistication; and

WHEREAS, there is an understanding that Indian tribes and states, schools and universities can work together in ways that are respectful of tribal culture and ensure that Indian imagery is utilized in an honorable manner; and

WHEREAS, it is recognized that some tribes enjoy a positive relationship with state geographical site, local universities and schools having experienced many years of fruitful endeavors meant to bring about progress for tribal members.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the National Caucus of Native American State Legislators hereby demands a ban on the use of derogatory names and racist stereotypes as sports mascots and on state geographic sites.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Caucus of Native American State Legislators supports and respects the right of tribal councils to make their own decisions on the use of names on tribal lands and tribal schools.

Sponsored by: Delegate Talmadge Branch, Maryland

Approved date is: August 18, 2014

Certified by Caucus Chair: Del. Talmadge Branch

Ratified certified by: The National Caucus of Native American State Legislators