



National
Congress of
American
Indians



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Joel Barkin
Oneida Nation V.P. for Communications
(315) 361-8173
jbarkin@oneida-nation.org

Change the Mascot Applauds United Church of Christ for Calling on Washington NFL Team to Change Name

The National United Church of Christ passed today a resolution pressing the Washington NFL team to change its R-word name and encouraging the more than 1.1 million members in its 5,100-plus churches to boycott the team's games and merchandise.

Oneida Nation Homelands (June 29, 2015) The grassroots Change the Mascot campaign today praised the National United Church of Christ (UCC) for its passage of a strongly worded resolution calling for the Washington NFL team to end its use of the “racially demeaning” R-word and “all affiliated imagery.” The resolution also urges the UCC’s more than 1.1 million nationwide members to join a boycott of the Washington football team’s games and to avoid wearing or purchasing any of the team’s merchandise until its name is changed.

The resolution was voted upon by a Committee of the General Synod at the UCC’s General Synod in Cleveland, Ohio, where thousands of UCC members gather biennially to “discern resolutions of witness, church structure, and function” and “stand up for issues that demand a faithful witness.”

Change the Mascot leaders NCAI Executive Director Jackie Pata and Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter said in a joint statement about the resolution's passage:

“We applaud the United Church of Christ for taking a bold stance against the use of this demeaning and damaging racial epithet. With its vote, the UCC is demonstrating that organizations and individuals can make conscious choices to demonstrate compassion and respect for their fellow man by working to eliminate this offensive, dictionary-defined slur from our nation's vernacular.

“As religious leaders from diverse backgrounds all across America continue to speak out about the need to change this derogatory term, Washington team owner Dan Snyder should face the facts and stop clinging to this deeply offensive name. Profiting from the slurring of people of color is a choice that he is making, but we remain hopeful that he will in time come to recognize that changing the mascot is an important moral and civil rights issue that is not going away.”

Change the Mascot is a grassroots campaign that works to educate the public about the damaging effects on Native Americans arising from the continued use of the R-word. This civil and human rights movement has helped elevate the debate surrounding the Washington team's name, bringing the issue to the forefront of social consciousness.

Since its launch, Change the Mascot has garnered support from a diverse coalition of prominent advocates including elected officials from both parties, Native American tribes, sports icons, leading journalists and news publications, civil and human rights organizations and religious leaders and institutions.

###

Follow us on Twitter:

[@ChangeDCMascot](https://twitter.com/ChangeDCMascot)

[@OneidaNatnNews](https://twitter.com/OneidaNatnNews)