



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Change the Mascot Praises Major League Baseball and Cleveland Franchise for Eliminating Offensive Chief Wahoo Mascot

Oneida Nation Homelands (January 29, 2018) The Change the Mascot campaign today is applauding Major League Baseball and its Cleveland franchise for their decision to eliminate the team's offensive Chief Wahoo logo and mascot, beginning in 2019. The grassroots group is also calling on the NFL and its Washington team to heed the growing calls for change and similarly remove the team's derogatory R-word name and mascot.

Change the Mascot issued the following statement today in response to the news:

“The Cleveland baseball team has rightly recognized that Native Americans do not deserve to be denigrated as cartoon mascots, and the team's move is a reflection of a grassroots movement that has pressed sports franchises to respect Native people,” said Oneida Nation Representative Ray Halbritter, leader of the Change the Mascot campaign.

“Cleveland's decision should finally compel the Washington football team to make the same honorable decision. For too long, people of color have been stereotyped with these kinds of

hurtful symbols -- and no symbol is more hurtful than the football team in the nation's capital using a dictionary- defined racial slur as its team name. Washington Owner Dan Snyder needs to look at Cleveland's move and then look in the mirror and ask whether he wants to be forever known as the most famous purveyor of bigotry in modern sports, or if he wants to finally stand on the right side of history and change his team's name. We hope he chooses the latter."

[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 reshape the debate surrounding the Washington team's name and brought 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.

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