



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Change the Mascot Responds to Today's Comments from NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell on MLB's Removal of Chief Wahoo

Oneida Nation Homelands (January 30, 2018) The Change the Mascot campaign has responded to today's comments from NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell. When asked about Major League Baseball's removal of Cleveland's Chief Wahoo logo and whether he would take similar action regarding the offensive R-word name of the Washington NFL team, Goodell said he would not push for the change, citing a highly questioned Washington Post poll and team owner Dan Snyder's limited conversations with Native Americans.

In response, Change the Mascot is reminding the public of the true facts around this issue:

- Every major Native American organization in the United States has called for the R-word's removal
- [Social science research](#) has proven that mascots like the R-word have negative effects on Native Americans' self-esteem and psychological well-being, and even promote racism in others exposed to them

- [Every major English dictionary](#) defines the term as an offensive slur
- In 2014, [half of the U.S. Senate](#) signed a letter to Roger Goodell urging him to change the name
- The country's [top civil rights organizations](#), including the NAACP, ACLU and more, have repeatedly called for the NFL's removal of the R-word
- Top [religious leaders](#) and groups have spoken out against the NFL's use of the R-word
- The [American Psychological Association](#) has recommended immediate retirement of Native mascots
- The [United Nations'](#) special expert on indigenous peoples called on the NFL to stop using the R-word because it is a "hurtful reminder of the long history of mistreatment of Native American people in the United States"
- Schools across the country have dropped the offensive name, including the [State of California](#) which passed a state law prohibiting public schools from using the R-word as a mascot

In addition to sharing these important fact points, the campaign issued the following statement:

“Indian Country has spoken with a clear and unified voice that promoting and profiting off of the R-word slur, which denigrates our heritage and harms our people, is most definitely offensive and certainly not an ‘honor’ as the team and league claim. Ignoring the overwhelming feedback from those directly affected by the term and hiding behind discredited defenses is a poor attempt to deny the inevitable need for a long overdue name change.”

[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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