



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Brett Stagnitti
Oneida Nation Public Affairs Manager
(315) 829-8310
bstagnitti@oneida-nation.org

New Minnesota Change the Mascot Ad Condemns the Use of Hate Speech

ONEIDA NATION HOMELANDS (NY) (November 6, 2013) The latest Oneida Indian Nation ad calling for a name change from Washington's NFL team will air in Minneapolis this week in the run-up to Washington's Thursday night game against the Minnesota Vikings. The ad's release comes just days after the Minneapolis City Council issued an open letter to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell and Washington team owner Dan Snyder asking them to change the offensive name.

Similar sentiments were expressed by the D.C. Council, which this week overwhelmingly passed a resolution calling their hometown team's name "racist and derogatory" and urging Washington's team owner to change the mascot.

Minnesota Congresswoman Betty McCollum has been a leading force in the campaign against the organization's continued use of the R-word epithet, and appeared at Change the Mascot's symposium in Washington, D.C. last month.

The new advertisement, entitled "Holdout," points to the continued use of hate speech by the Washington NFL team despite a shift in public opinion and what is considered acceptable language in modern society. Airing on KFAN-FM on Thursday, the radio spot is part of the nationwide Change the Mascot campaign, which is broadcasting similar ads in Washington and all cities where the team plays road games.

“Americans agree that hateful, derogatory slurs against ethnic groups are unacceptable and yet, the Washington NFL team continues to perpetuate such speech on a national and international stage.” said Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter. “We appreciate the strong support our efforts have received from Congresswoman McCollum and others in Minnesota. The Change the Mascot campaign to end the use of the damaging R-word is not going away.”

During a meeting last week with the NFL, the Oneida Indian Nation requested the opportunity to address all NFL team owners during the events surrounding the Super Bowl in February and NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell was invited to visit the tribe’s homelands. The Oneida Indian Nation also asked Goodell to amend the league bylaws to prohibit the league from naming teams with racial slurs, and requested that the Commissioner use his power to refer Washington team owner Dan Snyder for possible sanctions for promoting a slur that is “detrimental to the welfare” of the NFL’s image.

To listen to the new radio ad, titled, “Holdout,” [click here](#). For more information go to www.changethemascot.org

Text of the “Holdout” ad:

NARRATOR: At one time hate speech was all too common in this country. From African Americans being called the N-word to derogatory terms for Hispanics, European immigrants and others, our history is scarred by the language of bigotry. Modern society agrees this kind of language is unacceptable, but there are still some holdouts such as Washington's NFL team.

RAY HALBRITTER: I'm Ray Halbritter of the Oneida Indian Nation. Members of Congress from both parties, led by Minnesota's Betty McCollum, have urged Washington's team to stop using the R-word, but the NFL has refused to act. It's a cruel insult that hurts Native people, our communities and our children.

As proud NFL sponsors, we want the league to be a unifying force, not a source of intolerance. Commissioner Roger Goodell should use his power to do the right thing and change Washington's team name. Native people don't deserve to be treated as targets of a slur. We deserve to be treated as what we are: Americans

###