



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MLK Day Ad: D.C. Congresswoman and Civil Rights Leader Says Dr. King Would Demand End to Washington NFL Team Name

The latest ad from the Oneida Indian Nation's Change the Mascot campaign will air this weekend in Washington, D.C., along with Denver and Seattle, sites of the NFL's conference championship games

ONEIDA NATION HOMELANDS (NY) (January 16, 2014) As part of its season-long Change the Mascot campaign to end the use of the R-word slur by Washington's NFL team, the Oneida Indian Nation of New York today released a new radio ad entitled "Civil Rights" featuring civil rights leader and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.). Having helped organize Dr. King's 1963 March on Washington, Norton says in the ad that if Dr. King were alive today, he would support the Change the Mascot campaign. The latest radio spot is set to run over Martin Luther King, Jr. Day weekend in Washington, D.C., as well as in Denver and Seattle, the sites of the NFL's conference championship games.

"As the lone congressional representative of the District of Columbia and a renowned civil rights leader, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton is a uniquely powerful voice telling the NFL that it must stop the Washington team from continuing to promote a dictionary-defined racial slur," said Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter. "As we celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King this weekend, the NFL should honor his crusade for equality and mutual respect by finally using its power to change the Washington team's name."

As the Change the Mascot campaign's radio ads have aired throughout the current NFL season, public health experts, civil rights groups, editorial boards, city councils, sports-industry icons, members of Congress from both parties, and the President of the United States have all spoken out against the Washington team's continued use of the R-word.

Added Halbritter: “From city councils to top editorial boards to Members of Congress to the President of the United States, those supporters who have joined the Change the Mascot campaign understand a very simple truth: marketing a team with a slur against Native peoples is unacceptable, especially when the team represents our nation's capital.”

“The fact is that we don't deserve to be treated as the target of such an epithet, we deserve to be treated as what we are: Americans.” Last month, the membership of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the nation’s premier civil and human rights coalition representing more than 200 diverse national organizations, voted unanimously for a resolution urging the owner of the Washington NFL franchise to change the team’s offensive name.

The latest ads will air on radio stations WMAL in Washington, D.C., KDSP in Denver and KIRO in Seattle. You can learn more about the campaign and download the new ad at www.changethemascot.org

To listen to the new radio ad, titled, “Civil Rights,” [click here](#).

The full text of the “Civil Rights” ad:

CONGRESSWOMAN HOLMES NORTON: “Hello, I am Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton. It is my privilege to represent the residents of the District of Columbia.

The residents of the capital of our nation have always tried to set an example for tolerance and mutual respect. Yet the current name of our NFL football team stands in stark contrast to these values. Many of our residents, like me, were part of the civil rights movement or identify strongly with its goals and philosophy. We recognize that the Change the Mascot campaign to end the use of the “R-word” is both a moral and civil rights issue in keeping with our city’s respect for the dignity of all people.

We have no doubt that if Martin Luther King Jr. could speak today, he would lend his support to the current efforts of our Native American brothers and sisters. We know from our history as African Americans in this country that offensive terms not only should, but can, be cast aside if we do not retreat into silence.

The Washington football team should change the mascot and make the name of our team a source of pride that honors D.C.’s tradition of respect for all Americans.”

VOICEOVER: Paid for by the Oneida Indian Nation of New York.

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