



Change the Mascot!

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Change the Mascot Calls on Commissioner Roger Goodell to Adopt Proactive Stance on Racism By Implementing an NFL Owners Code of Conduct

Oneida Nation Homelands (Dec. 11, 2014) Following the National Football League's recent discussions about its updated conduct policies, the Change the Mascot Campaign today called upon the league and NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell to immediately implement an owners code of conduct to eliminate the use of dictionary-defined racial slurs and to address other behaviors that reflect poorly on the league.

Change the Mascot is urging Goodell, who owned up to "getting it wrong" with several past policy choices,* to stop ignoring this serious issue facing the league, especially when faced with strong opposition from leading human rights and civil rights organizations. The owners code of conduct provides a chance for the NFL to be proactive on the issue of racism, as opposed to adopting defensive and reactive stances toward physical violence after finding itself the target of immense criticism for its recent mishandling of incidents involving players.

Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter stated: "The NFL could demonstrate true commitment to opposing racism by implementing an owners code of conduct that

addresses odious actions by team owners and ends the callous profiting from the use of dictionary-defined racial slurs.”

The Change the Mascot Campaign is calling upon the NFL to implement the following provisions as a part of its code of conduct for owners:

- NFL team owners will not be permitted to employ the use of dictionary-defined racial slurs as the name and mascot of their teams
- Team owners will be banned from memorializing racist ideology by naming sections of their stadiums in honor of avowed segregationists**
- NFL team owners will not be permitted to pursue legal action against individuals simply because they have dared to petition and/or campaign against their team’s use of a dictionary-defined slur***
- No NFL team owner will be permitted to falsely claim that his or her team name was given by a Native American, especially in instances where such a coach is not Native American and the name was given by a segregationist who has stated unequivocally that no fake Indians inspired him to select the name.****
- NFL team owners will be required to meet with the leadership of groups who oppose their team names on the grounds that they are racial slurs, especially in instances where there is a large critical mass of people who are deeply offended
- No NFL owners should distribute VIP passes and facilitate media access for self-proclaimed Native Americans who are not actually Native American, especially in cases where such individuals cannot spell the name of the tribes they are purporting to represent*****
- Owners should refrain from attempts to deflect widespread criticism by creating charitable organizations that employ the use of racial slurs in their name*****
- NFL owners should refrain from hiring individuals to lead charitable organizations after the Office of Inspector General has found that they and their organization have provided “no benefit” in exchange for almost \$1 million in federal funds intended to help Native Americans*****
- Owners should remain attuned to major societal shifts and consider moving toward another brand in the event that broadcasters stop using their team name on air, publications refuse to print it, and/or e-commerce sites such as Etsy ban their merchandise*****
- NFL owners should be encouraged to uphold the American ideals of tolerance and mutual respect by opposing racism at all times and avoiding the use of racial epithets

The grassroots Change the Mascot campaign, led by the Oneida Indian Nation and the National Congress of American Indians, works to educate the public about the damaging use of the R-word on Native Americans. The group has reshaped the debate surrounding the Washington team's name and brought the issue to the forefront of social consciousness over the past year. Since its launch, Change the Mascot's civil and human rights movement has garnered support from a diverse coalition of prominent advocates including Member of Congress from both sides of the aisle, Native American tribes, sports icons, top journalists and news publications, civil rights organizations and religious leaders.

*Roger Goodell pledges more transparency, new measures, 9/19/14,
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***Native Americans seek dismissal of Redskins lawsuit against them in trademark case, 9/22/14, washingtonpost.com/local/native-americans-seek-dismissal-of-redskins-lawsuit-in-trademark-case/2014/09/22/fc9fc362-418e-11e4-b437-1a7368204804_story.html

****The 81-Year-Old Newspaper Article That Destroys The Redskins' Justification For Their Name, 5/30/14, thinkprogress.org/sports/2014/05/30/3443168/redskins-founder-i-didnt-name-team-to-honor-native-americans/

*****Debate over Redskins name more intense than ever, 8/10/14,
washingtontimes.com/news/2014/aug/10/debate-over-redskins-name-more-intense-than-ever/?page=all

*****Dan Snyder Is Starting A Foundation For Native Americans, 3/24/14,
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*****Redskins foundation head drew criticism in I.G. report, 3/28/14,
usatoday.com/story/sports/nfl/2014/03/27/washington-redskins-orginal-americans-gary-edwards-inspector-general/6983217/

*****Etsy bans Redskins name and logo, 9/9/14, washingtonpost.com/blogs/dc-sports-bog/wp/2014/09/09/etsy-bans-redskins-name-and-logo/

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