



## Change the Mascot!

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### **Change the Mascot Campaign Applauds the Fritz Pollard Alliance for Issuing Clarion Call to the NFL and Washington's Team to Change the Racist R-Word Name**

*On a holiday honoring the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. the respected civil rights group that works closely with the NFL points to the "demeaning" and "disrespectful" nature of the R-word and says "that name has to be changed."*

**Oneida Nation Homelands (January 19, 2015)** – The Change the Mascot Campaign today applauded the Fritz Pollard Alliance for taking an historic and definitive stance in opposition to the R-word name of Washington's NFL team. On the national holiday honoring the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., the alliance has written to Commissioner Roger Goodell calling upon the National Football League to act, according to an in-depth report in The Washington Post.\*

"We have to take a stand. That name has to be changed. We can't just leave it up to [the team]. We think it's disrespectful. We think it's, by definition, demeaning," said Fritz Pollard Alliance Chairman John Wooten, who played for the team and for the Cleveland Browns as a lineman in the 1960s. "As the NFL continues to move in the direction of respect and dignity, one of its teams carrying this name cuts glaringly against the grain," read a letter co-signed by Wooten and Fritz Pollard Alliance Executive Director Harry Carson. "It hurts the League and it hurts us all."

Leaders of the national grassroots Change the Mascot campaign, Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter and National Congress of American Indians Executive Director Jackie Pata, today released a joint statement:

“By calling in such unequivocal terms for the NFL and the team to change the R-word mascot, the Fritz Pollard Alliance has chosen to stand boldly on the right side of history,” said Halbritter and Pata. “The Fritz Pollard Alliance has played a pivotal and historic role in modern-day sports by helping to bring about some of the most impactful and socially responsible changes within the NFL. It is a testament to the group’s courageous commitment to opposing racism against all people that it decided to issue its clarion call to the NFL and Washington’s team on the national holiday honoring the legacy of civil rights icon Martin Luther King, Jr.

“We deeply appreciate that the Fritz Pollard Alliance took to heart the sentiments we expressed in our meeting with the group last year, and thank them for their moral clarity in opposing the continued use of a dictionary-defined racial slur that demeans and denigrates Native Americans. Our hope is that the league, Washington’s team, and its owner Dan Snyder will finally decide to do the right thing and make a long-overdue change that enables the NFL to move forward in a way that demonstrates a true commitment to upholding the American ideals of tolerance and mutual respect.

“The team and Snyder seem to think that if they just ignore the mascot issue and do nothing then it will go away, but nothing could be further from the truth. This issue is not going away and with every passing day the team’s refusal to do the right thing becomes a more indelible stain on the legacy of Snyder and the Washington franchise.”

Men and women from various backgrounds and all across America have thrown their support behind the national Change the Mascot campaign, which can be reached at [www.changethemascot.org](http://www.changethemascot.org) or on Twitter @ChangeDCMascot.

The grassroots movement has garnered support from Native American tribes, civil rights leaders, religious and human rights organizations, sports icons, political leaders from both parties and the President of the United States.

Read the full text of [The Washington Post](#) report.

\* [http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/civil-rights-group-closely-allied-with-the-nfl-calls-for-the-redskins-to-change-its-name/2015/01/18/d8c692ce-9cfe-11e4-bcfb-059ec7a93ddc\\_story.html?tid=pm\\_pop](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/civil-rights-group-closely-allied-with-the-nfl-calls-for-the-redskins-to-change-its-name/2015/01/18/d8c692ce-9cfe-11e4-bcfb-059ec7a93ddc_story.html?tid=pm_pop)

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