



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Change the Mascot Campaign Praises Organization of American Historians Call to Change Washington NFL Team's Name

Oneida Nation Homelands (May 1, 2015) The Change the Mascot campaign today released the following statement from leaders Jackie Pata, Executive Director of the National Congress of American Indians, and Oneida Nation Representative Ray Halbritter, in response to the news that one of the most prestigious academic organizations in the study of history has called on the National Football League to change the name of the Washington football franchise.

“Washington team’s officials have insisted that throughout history, the dictionary defined racial slur they promote is actually a term of honor for Native Americans. Such an assertion is factually false, and today’s important announcement by the Organization of American Historians underscores that truth. We commend this prominent organization for their in-depth methodical analysis of the history of the name. Their conclusion restates and reinforces what the Change the Mascot campaign has always maintained.”

Pata and Halbritter continued: “We are gratified that such an important social science institution is standing on the right side of history and debunking once and for all the notion that slurring people of color is somehow a way to honor us. It is the opposite - it is a destructive effort that

tells Americans everywhere that people of color should be denigrated on the basis of our ethnicity. It is time for the National Football League and the Washington team to finally stop using this name and start respecting the ideals of civility, tolerance and equality in our increasingly diverse country.”

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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