



# Change the Mascot!

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## Change the Mascot Responds to New Poll on Washington NFL Team's R-Word Name

**Oneida Nation Homelands (May 19, 2016)** The Change the Mascot campaign today issued the following response to a new poll which claims that most Native Americans are not offended by the R-word name and mascot of the Washington NFL team.

“The results of this poll confirm a reality that is encouraging but hardly surprising: Native Americans are resilient and have not allowed the NFL’s decades-long denigration of us to define our own self-image,” said Change the Mascot leaders National Congress of American Indians Executive Director Jackie Pata and Oneida Nation Representative Ray Halbritter. “However, that proud resilience does not give the NFL a license to continue marketing, promoting, and profiting off of a dictionary-defined racial slur -- one that tells people outside of our community to view us as mascots.”

“Social science research and first-hand experience has told us that this kind of denigration has both visible and unseen consequences for Native Americans in this country. This is especially the case for children, who were not polled and who are in a particularly vulnerable position to be bullied by the NFL. It is the 21st century -- it is long overdue for Native Americans to be treated not as mascots or targets of slurs, but instead as equals.”

[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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