



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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National Congress of American Indians Passes Resolution Opposing Washington NFL Team's Return to D.C. Until R-word Name is Changed

Oneida Indian Nation Homelands – Oct. 30, 2018 – The [Change the Mascot](#) campaign today is praising a resolution just passed by the [National Congress of American Indians](#) (NCAI), which opposes the Washington NFL team's potential return to the District of Columbia until the franchise ends its use of the derogatory R-word as its name and mascot.

Passed on Friday at NCAI's Annual Convention & Marketplace, the resolution "reaffirms [NCAI's] categorical opposition to the use of the demeaning R-word by the Washington NFL team" and "call[s] on the District of Columbia's governing leaders, including the D.C. Council and Mayor, to oppose and refuse to approve a move back to the District by the franchise until it changes its offensive name."

"Public dollars should be spent empowering communities, not dehumanizing them," said NCAI President Jefferson Keel. "The social and psychological harms this derogatory name causes Native people – in particular our youth – are well-documented, and they are severe."

Change the Mascot leader and Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter spoke at the event in support of the resolution. "The Washington team name is an indisputable racial slur," Halbritter said. "This word should not be used by anyone, much less a major professional sports team that represents the nation's capital. And city officials should not provide public support to a team that is promoting a slur."

Following the resolution's passage, D.C. Councilmember David Grosso (I-At Large) said: "I continue to be frustrated and offended by the resistance of the Washington Football Team to change its name – an offensive racial slur that should not be displayed on a new stadium here in the District of Columbia. I will oppose any efforts for the team to play in our city until they adopt a more appropriate moniker that honors our region, history, or nation."

Last year, Councilmember Grosso co-signed a letter with Change the Mascot urging Washington NFL team owner Dan Snyder to remove tributes to former owner and infamous segregationist George Preston Marshall at the team's current stadium. Previously, Grosso introduced a resolution, which was passed by the D.C. Council, condemning the team's ongoing use of the "racist and derogatory" R-word.

About Change the Mascot

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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