



Change the Mascot!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Joel Barkin
Oneida Nation V.P. for Communications
(315) 361-8173
jbarkin@oneida-nation.org

Change the Mascot Campaign Calls to Drop Offensive Washington NFL Mascot Following Groundbreaking Study

Oneida Indian Nation Homelands – Feb 4, 2020 – A new survey of Native Americans shows that at least half are offended by the name of Washington’s football team; contradicting earlier, less-rigorous studies and rekindling calls by the grassroots Change the Mascot campaign to rename the team immediately.

The study, carried out by researchers at the University of California, Berkeley, is the largest scientific investigation to date of the relationship between Native American identity and attitudes towards Native mascots. Researchers found that out of 1,000 Native Americans surveyed, 49 percent agree, or strongly agree, that they find the use of the Redskins name offensive. That number rose to 67 percent for participants who frequently engage in tribal cultural practices.

The results, which will be published in the journal *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, contradict earlier polls that found the majority of Native Americans were not bothered by the name. Those polls have been used to shield the NFL team from criticism in the past.

“Having long called attention to the deeply offensive use and lasting psychological impacts stemming from the NFL’s use of a dictionary-defined slur for Native Americans, we are now urging the Washington team and NFL officials to take our collective voices seriously and finally change the mascot,” said Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter, head of the Change the Mascot campaign.

“Native Americans from across the country have been calling for the eradication of the racist and hurtful R-word epithet. And while we are pleased to see prestigious universities devote their attention to the issue, it should not require academic studies to validate appeals by people of color for decency and respect,” Halbritter added.

More information about the study can be found at the following link:

<https://news.berkeley.edu/2020/02/04/native-mascots-survey/>

Those interested in joining the Change the Mascot campaign are urged to take action at changethemascot.org.

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.

###

Follow us on Twitter:

[@ChangeDCMascot](https://twitter.com/ChangeDCMascot)

[@OneidaNatnNews](https://twitter.com/OneidaNatnNews)

To view this release online visit: