



July 5, 2020

Mr. Daniel M. Snyder  
Owner, Washington R-skins  
21300 R-skins Park Drive  
Ashburn, VA 20147

Dear Mr. Snyder:

Rebrand Washington Football (RWF), a grassroots advocacy group of fans, is pleased with your decision to institute a review of the name. You must steer clear of any Native American themes and mascots. RWF also believes that you must quickly commence discussion with Native American leaders, advocates, and their allies.

In the article, [Rivera Hopes New Name is in Place before Season](#), it appears that you are about to repeat mistakes of the first owner that resulted in a dictionary defined racial slur being the name of the team. The interview with Coach Rivera suggests that you and he have already narrowed the choice to two or three names that combine Native American and military themes. [Academic studies and Native American advocates](#) have made it clear that any Native American images and mascots are unacceptable and are damaging stereotypes.

Even so called positive names such as Warriors are harmful as they constrain the public's view of Native American characteristics and their place in society. It is also sadly ironic to combine Native American and military themes, considering that the role of the U.S. military from the colonial era, the Civil War, and in the post war decades was to further the extermination of Native Americans.

Native American advocates and civil rights organizations like the National Congress of American Indians have decried the use of all Native American mascots. We should follow the lead of Indigenous women like Suzan Harjo and Amanda Blackhorse who have dedicated their lives to Native American dignity.

After declaring all Native American mascots off-limits, you should engage the community just as Abe Pollin did when he changed the name of his team from the Bullets to the Wizards. Mr. Pollin asked the community for suggestions. This generated excitement for his team. You can likewise make a name change a positive development for your team by engaging and reviving your fan base.

We sincerely hope that you engage the community in an inclusive manner with the needs and concerns of Native Americans foremost as you engage in your rebranding efforts. The season should start with your team being called "Washington" as you search for a name that unites instead of divides the community. If you cling to old habits and adopt a Native American theme,



you will simply be lurching from one controversy to the next and will be further diminishing the public reputation of your team and shrinking your fan base.

We stand ready to work with you in striving for a better future. We eagerly await your reply. You can reach us on [rebrandwf@gmail.com](mailto:rebrandwf@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

Josh Silver  
Bethesda, MD

Ian Washburn  
Arlington, VA

Bill Mosley  
Washington DC