



December 3, 2016

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

Dear Mr. Snyder:

Rebrand Washington Football (RWF) is delivering to you 1,820 petition signatures today. Last year, we delivered 1,641 signatures. Over the two year time period, we have provided you with more than 3,400 signatures asking you to change the name of your football team. We will keep gathering thousands of signatures and educating fans and residents of the area until you change the name.

The name is demeaning. It robs Native Americans of their identity. It is a dictionary defined racial slur that refers to scalping. While we appreciate that you think that you are honoring Native Americans, the name has the opposite effect. In our advocacy, we have met Native American parents who struggle with anger and disgust when they try to explain to their children why a team uses stereotypical Native American logos and names. Indeed, the American Psychological Association released findings in 2005 calling for the permanent discontinuance of Native American mascots based on a large body of scientific research concluding that these mascots are harmful.

This year, the Washington Post conducted a poll purporting to show that the vast majority of Native Americans do not think that the name is offensive. However, the Native Americans living in the DC region that we have met through RWF vigorously oppose the name. The experience of Native Americans living here reinforces one of the biggest flaws of the poll. The poll weighed opinions from respondents who do not have a team with Native American imagery in their area as heavily as respondents who must live with this indignity on a daily basis. Finally, it is not appropriate to poll on an issue that involves basic human or civil rights. Civil rights laws were not enacted based on poll results but on firm convictions that discrimination is immoral.

We are also enclosing statements from the NAACP and the ADL that these venerable organizations produced for today's delivery. The NAACP says, "From Jackie Robinson to Billie Jean King, professional athletes have been a driving force for equality in our nation. Thus, we urge the Washington franchise to change its name to something that is not offensive, racist, or demeaning to an entire race of people." The ADL echoes this theme and states, "Professional sports in the United States are an inspiring story of diversity, respect, and inclusion. Moving away from names that evoke negative stereotypes is central to the values of inclusion, pluralism, and equality."



The voices of Native American youth must be heard. In a statement we are enclosing from the Center for Native American Youth at the Aspen Institute, 64 percent of surveyed Native American youth said that mascots with Native American themes must be retired in order to improve the school climate and learning environment.

Our nation just endured one of the most divisive Presidential elections in our history. Hate crimes have spiked since the election. In these times, gestures of goodwill are desperately needed. Although you maintain the name is honorable, it would be a widely hailed gesture on your part if you announced that you wanted to end the animosity and the controversy associated with the name. Moreover, you could proclaim that your organization is doing its part to start the process of healing and reconciliation by changing the name. The team's reputation and regard would soar.

We reiterate our offer to meet with you and work with you to change the name so all of us can embrace the team. We can be reached at rebrandwf@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Josh Silver
Bethesda, MD

Ian Washburn
Arlington, VA

Bill Mosley
Washington DC