



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians Resolution #TUL-05-087

TITLE: Support for NCAA Ban on "Indian" Mascots

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WHEREAS, we, the members of the National Congress of American Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

WHEREAS, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, the use of "Native American" sports mascots, logos, or symbols perpetuates stereotypes of American Indians that are very harmful. The "warrior savage" myth has plagued this country's relationships with the Indian people, as it reinforces the racist view that Indians are uncivilized and uneducated and it has been used to justify policies of forced assimilation and destruction of Indian culture; and

WHEREAS, sports teams with "Indian" logos represent Native Americans as archaic stereotypes when Native Americans are members of and contributors to contemporary society, and two-thirds or over 2,000 of such "Indian" references in sports have been eliminated during the past 35 years. The stereotypes of uneducated warrior savages cause employers to discriminate against American Indians who are seeking jobs in fields that require education and sophistication; and

WHEREAS, NCAI also understands that Indian tribes, universities and sports teams can work together in ways that are respectful of tribal culture and ensure that Indian imagery is utilized in an honorable manner and NCAI respects the right of tribal councils to make their own decisions regarding their relationships with school district and university sports teams; and

WHEREAS, some tribes enjoy a positive relationship with local universities, having experienced many years of fruitful endeavors meant to bring about progress for tribal members, with universities who demonstrate their commitment to serve the Indian community through scholarships, grants, academic curriculums, etc., and seek out cooperation with the tribes.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NCAI does hereby oppose the use of racist and demeaning “Indian” sports mascots and strongly supports the National Collegiate Athletic Association ban on “hostile or offensive” mascots in postseason NCAA activities. NCAI supports a complete ban on the use of offensive and derogatory “Indian” mascots in all sports arenas; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NCAI acknowledges that tribes, schools and sports teams can work together in ways that are respectful of tribal culture and respects the right of each tribe and tribal community to decide for itself how best to protect and celebrate its heritage and make their own decisions regarding their relationships with school and university sports teams; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that absent specific approval or consent from the relevant tribal council(s), that the NCAI will continue to oppose the use of any “Indian” sports mascot; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NCAI reiterates its support of and commitment to the Native position in the ongoing litigation, Harjo et al v. Pro Football, Inc., and reiterates its support of and commitment to all prior NCAI resolutions on the subject of “Native” references in sports; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

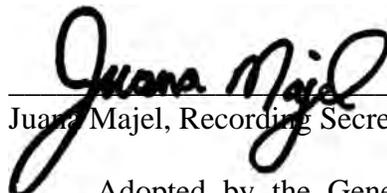
CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted at the 2005 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the 62nd Annual Convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma on November 4, 2005 with a quorum present.



Joe Garcia, President

ATTEST:



Juana Majel, Recording Secretary

Adopted by the General Assembly during the 2005 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians held from October 30, 2005 to November 4, 2005 at the Convention Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma.