



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians
Resolution #ANC-14-018

TITLE: Support for the Elimination of Race-Based Native Logos, Mascots, and Names by State Athletic Associations Receiving Federal Funds

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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, through its unique relationship with Indian nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

WHEREAS, self-representational use of logos, mascots and names remain a cherished tradition in many Native communities, and therefore, tribal and Native schools that so choose to retain traditional names and symbolism should be exempt from this resolution; and

WHEREAS, Native cultures have endured centuries despite attempts to destroy and assimilate them and continued use of stereotypes by major educational institutions and national sports franchises not only detracts from the proud history, cultures, and traditions of Native peoples, it is harmful to Native children; and

WHEREAS, the use of negative stereotypes is a testament to the continued practice of the outright commodification of Native peoples and their unique cultural identities; and

WHEREAS, the combined advocacy of tribes, intertribal organizations, and non-tribal partners on this issue has resulted in the elimination of Native logos, mascots, and names in hundreds of educational settings across the nation by providing workshops, presentation of professional papers, adopting resolutions, providing legal briefs, and holding forums on organizing networks of Native educators as advocates; and

WHEREAS, educational institutions and national sports franchises, unfortunately, continue the practice of using Native logos, mascots, and names despite great success and efforts by Native organizations, tribes, parents, and other stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, the limited and sparse representations of Native Americans in the media and popular culture comprise a significant portion of what children learn about Native people and thereby impact their identity formation by reinforcing stereotypes about Native cultures from the past and present; and

WHEREAS, there is a growing base of support calling for the elimination of Native logos, mascots, and names as evidence by condemnation from national leaders, such as President Barack Obama and numerous congressional members; professional organizations, such as the American Psychological Association; education advocacy organizations, such as the National Education Association; human rights and tribal organizations, like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the National Congress of American Indians; and sports regulatory commissions, like the National Collegiate Athletic Association; and

WHEREAS, educational institutions and national sports franchises, such as Washington, DC's National Football League organization, should not be vehicles of institutionalized racism.

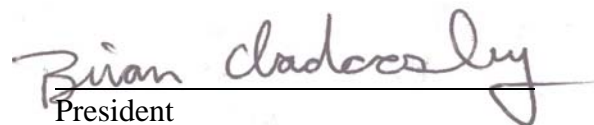
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NCAI calls upon the Secretary of the Department of Education to immediately eliminate race-based Native logos, mascots, and names from state educational institutions across the United States, especially those receiving federal funds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NCAI does hereby call for educational institutions and national sports franchises to cease their use of such race-based Native logos, mascots, and names in the effort to remove these stereotypes and raise the self-esteem of Native students so they have the same opportunity as their non-Native peers to achieve academically without discrimination; 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 by the General Assembly at the 2014 Mid-Year Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Dena'ina Civic & Convention Center, June 8-11, 2014 in Anchorage, Alaska, with a quorum present.


President

ATTEST:


Recording Secretary