

May 28, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**WASHINGTON, D.C.—MEMBERS OF CONGRESS URGE SNYDER
AND THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE TO CHANGE THE
WASHINGTON TEAM'S NAME**

Ten Members of Congress recently sent a letter to Mr. Dan Snyder, owner of the National Football League's (NFL) Washington franchise, urging him to change the franchise's name. Similar letters were sent to Mr. Roger Goodell (Commissioner of the NFL), Mr. Frederick Smith (President and CEO of FedEx, a chief sponsor of Mr. Snyder's franchise), and the owners of the NFL's other 31 franchises.

Members of Congress include the Co-Chairs of the Congressional Native American Caucus Tom Cole (OK) and Betty McCollum (MN), Raúl M. Grijalva (AZ), Gwen Moore (WI), Michael M. Honda (CA), Donna M. Christensen (VI), Zoe Lofgren (CA), Barbara Lee (CA), Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC), and Eni F.H. Faleomavaega (AS).

In their letter to Mr. Snyder, Members of Congress acknowledged that "Native Americans throughout the country consider the 'R-word' a racial, derogatory slur akin to the 'N-word' among African Americans or the 'W-word' among Latinos. Such offensive epithets," the letter continued, "would no doubt draw wide-spread disapproval among the NFL's fan base. Yet the national coverage of Washington's NFL football team profits from a term that is equally disparaging to Native Americans."

The Members of Congress stated:

The current Chairman and Chief of the Penobscot Nation, Chief Kirk Francis, recently stated in a joint statement that the [R-word] is 'not just a racial slur or a derogatory term,' but a painful 'reminder of one of the most gruesome acts of . . . ethnic cleansing ever committed against the Penobscot people.' The hunting and killing of Penobscot Indians like animals, as declared by Chief Francis, was 'a most despicable and disgraceful act of genocide.'

. . .

In this day and age, it is imperative that you uphold your moral responsibility to disavow the usage of racial slurs. The usage of the ["R-word"] is especially harmful to Native American youth, tending to lower their sense of dignity and self-esteem. It also diminishes feelings of community worth among the Native American tribes and dampens the aspirations of their people.

We look forward to working with you to find a solution to this important matter.

The congressional call to rename Mr. Snyder's franchise was precipitated by the "Non-Disparagement of Native American Persons or Peoples in Trademark Registration Act of 2013" (H.R. 1278), which was introduced on March 20, 2013 by Congressman Eni F.H. Faleomavaega of American Samoa and cosponsored by 19 Members of Congress. This historic legislation seeks to cancel the federal registrations of trademarks using the word "redskin" (hereinafter "R-word") in reference to Native Americans.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Trademark Act of 1946 requires that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) not register any trademark that “[c]onsists of or comprises . . . matter which may disparage . . . persons, living or dead . . . or bring them into contempt, or disrepute.” 15 U.S.C. §1502(a). Accordingly, the PTO has rejected four registration applications that Mr. Snyder’s franchise has submitted for trademarks which proposed to use the “R-word” – three times in 1996 and once in 2002. The applications were denied on grounds that the “R-word” is disparaging and a racial slur relative to Native Americans.

In a recent statement, the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) elaborated on the PTO’s duty to the Native American community pursuant to the Trademark Act:

Native nations and citizens have a treaty, trust and special relationship with the United States, and rely on the federal government more than any other segment of society to make certain that its actions do no harm. Because of the duty of care owed to Indian tribes and people by the Department of Commerce, it is incumbent upon them to strictly enforce the provisions of 15 U.S.C. § 1052(a), in order to safeguard Indian tribes and citizens from racially or culturally disparaging federal trademarks. They are required by law to assess the issues in light of its federal Indian trust relationship and associated fiduciary duties to protect Indians and Indian culture from degrading federal trademark registrations. That trust relationship encompasses an affirmative duty on behalf of the Department of Commerce and the [Patent and Trademark Office] to protect tribal culture and safeguard Native Americans from racism in sports conducted under color of federal law.

The NFL’s Commitment to Diversity

In a recent article that appeared in the USA Today newspaper dated May 9, 2013, Mr. Snyder, owner of the Washington football franchise, declared, “We’ll never change the name. It’s that simple. NEVER – you can use caps.” As the Members of Congress noted, this position is inconsistent with the NFL’s “Commitment to Diversity,” which states:

Diversity is critically important to the NFL. It is a cultural and organizational imperative about dignity, respect, inclusion and opportunity. Accordingly, diversity has been incorporated into the League Values and Strategic Constants and is therefore an integral element in establishing the League’s strategic initiatives. Diversity is the right thing to do both for moral and ethical reasons as well as for the long-term business success of the League. To speak effectively to the broad society externally, the NFL must represent and celebrate a broad society internally. We must overcome the existing cynicism by making progress in both the culture and composition of the NFL organization.

To be effective in embracing and supporting diversity as an organization, every individual must take ownership of the diversity initiative and strive to make a difference in the culture and behaviors of the NFL while impacting workforce composition and advancement whenever possible, as described below:

Diversity Mission Statement

To cultivate an organization and community representing a wide variety of individuals at all levels, all of whom respect, honor and celebrate the broad range of human differences among us, while also embracing the commonalities we share, and to provide each individual with the opportunity to achieve his or her full potential as organizational goals are pursued.

The overall objective of the diversity effort is to create a culturally progressive and socially reflective organization that represents, supports and celebrates diversity at all levels.

H.R. 1278 Receives Nation-Wide Support

H.R. 1278 has received wide-spread support from both Native American and non-Native American organizations across the nation. In a letter to Members of Congress, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)—the oldest, largest and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization serving tribal governments and communities—recently stated:

This legislation will accomplish what Native American people, nations, and organizations have tried to do in the courts for almost twenty years – end the racist epithet that has served as the [name] of Washington's pro football franchise for far too long.

The Tulsa Indian Coalition Against Racism (TICAR) states that the “R-word” is “hurtful and injurious to our youth, as well as the entire Native American population.”

The Native American Finance Officers Association (NAFOA) states:

The term has never been acceptable in the Native community and causes harm to the collective self-esteem and status of American Indians in the larger society. . . What should be viewed as a national embarrassment has somehow turned into a celebrated namesake for a national sport.

The American Indian Movement West (AIM-WEST) states:

Our organization supports the goal of ridding the sports world of the disparaging name of the Washington pro football franchise. There is no question that this is a racist term that causes harm and injury, whether or not it is intended to do so, and must not be tolerated in decent society.

The United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc. (USET) states:

Overcoming the social challenges resulting from industry branding and media exposure has taken generations for other groups. Native communities are on a similar journey. In our work to protect and promote our sovereignty rights at all levels, existing stereotypes, bigotry, and racist views about our people often get in the way of progress. This legislation will assist Tribes in promoting an understanding of American Indian culture, positive images of Indian Country, the effects of historic trauma, and the modern-day successes and challenges Tribes face as we seek to improve the standard of living within our communities.

In addition to the above organizations, there are 50 other organizations that have pledged their support for this bill, including the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, the Comanche Nation of Oklahoma, the Oneida Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, the National Indian Youth Council, the National Indian Child Welfare Association, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, the National Indian Education Association, the National American Indian House Council, the American Indian College Fund, the National Native American Law Student Association, the Capitol Area Indian Resources, the American Indian Studies Program-University of Illinois (Urbana Champaign), the Native American House, the Wisconsin Indian Education Association, the Native Americans at Dartmouth, the Native Americans at Brown, the National Institute for Native Leadership in Higher Education, The Society of American Indian Government Employees, the Native American Journalists Association, UNITY Journalists for Diversity, the Indigenous Democratic Network, the Americans for Indian Opportunity, the Indigenous Alliance Without Borders, the International Indian Treaty Council, the First Peoples Worldwide, the Rio Grande Native American Church, the U.S. Forum for Sustainable and Responsible Investment, Religious Americans against Indian Nicknames & Logos, American University Washington College of Law Program on Information Justice and Intellectual Property, the United Tribes of Michigan, the Wisconsin Indian Education Association, Boston Common Asset Management, Calvert Investment Management, Catholic Health East, Dominican Sisters of Hope, Friends Fiduciary Corporation, Mercy Investment Services, Natural Investment, Newground Social Investment, Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment, Pax World Management, Progressive Asset Management, Rockefeller &

Co. Sustainability & Impact Investing Group, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, Travois Holdings, Trillium Asset Management, Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk, Walden Asset Management, and Zevin Asset Management.

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 13, 2013

Mr. Daniel M. Snyder
Owner
Washington Redskins
21300 Redskins Park Drive
Ashburn, VA 20147

Dear Mr. Snyder:

We are writing to urge you to change the name of your NFL franchise. For decades now, Native American leaders and organizations have been advocating an end to the use of “redskin” as your organization’s “brand” because it is derogatory, demeaning, and offensive.

Native Americans throughout the country consider the term “redskin” a racial, derogatory slur akin to the “N-word” among African Americans or the “W-word” among Latinos. Such offensive epithets would no doubt draw wide-spread disapproval among the NFL’s fan base. Yet the national coverage of Washington’s NFL football team profits from a term that is equally disparaging to Native Americans.

The current Chairman and Chief of the Penobscot Nation, Chief Kirk Francis, recently stated in a joint statement that the term “redskin” is “not just a racial slur or a derogatory term,” but a painful “reminder of one of the most gruesome acts of . . . ethnic cleansing ever committed against the Penobscot people.” The hunting and killing of Penobscot Indians like animals, as declared by Chief Francis, was “a most despicable and disgraceful act of genocide.” Additionally, former officials from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) have stated publicly that the term “redskin” is a racially-stereotyped name that needs to be changed.

In an attempt to correct your long-standing usage of this word, we introduced H.R. 1278, the *Non-Disparagement of Native American Persons or Peoples in Trademark Registration Act of 2013*. This bill (attached), introduced on March 20, 2013, would cancel the federal registrations of trademarks using the word “redskin” in reference to Native Americans. The Trademark Act of 1946 requires that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) not register any trademark that “[c]onsists of or comprises . . . matter which may disparage . . . persons, living or dead...or bring them into contempt, or disrepute.” 15 U.S.C. §1502(a). As you may be aware, the PTO has rejected four registration applications that your football franchise has submitted for trademarks which proposed to use the word “redskin” – three times in 1996 and

once in 2002. The PTO denied the applications on grounds that “redskin” is disparaging and obviously a racial slur relative to Native Americans.

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) – the oldest, largest and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization serving tribal governments and communities – has offered its full support for this legislation. We have also received the support of 27 other Native American organizations for H.R. 1278, including the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, the Comanche Nation of Oklahoma, the Oneida Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, the National Indian Education Association, the National Indian Youth Council, the National Indian Child Welfare Association, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, the American Indian College Fund, the National Native American Law Student Association, the Tulsa Indian Coalition Against Racism, the Capitol Area Indian Resources, the American Indian Studies-University of Illinois (Urbana Champaign), the Native American House, the Wisconsin Indian Education Association, the Native Americans at Dartmouth, the Native Americans at Brown, the National Institute for Native Leadership in Higher Education, the Society of American Indian Government Employees, the Native American Journalists Association, the Native American Finance Officers Association, the Indigenous Democratic Network, the Americans for Indian Opportunity, the Indigenous Alliance Without Borders, the International Indian Treaty Council, the First Peoples Worldwide, and the Rio Grande Native American Church.

We appreciate that there are complexities involved with changing your franchise’s name. However, we must also acknowledge that the NFL will never fulfill its “Commitment to Diversity” as long as this racial slur remains a key component of the NFL organization. As stated by the NFL,

Diversity is critically important to the NFL. It is a cultural and organizational imperative about dignity, respect, inclusion and opportunity. Accordingly, diversity has been incorporated into the League Values and Strategic Constants and is therefore an integral element in establishing the League's strategic initiatives. Diversity is the right thing to do both for moral and ethical reasons as well as for the long-term business success of the League. To speak effectively to the broad society externally, the NFL must represent and celebrate a broad society internally. We must overcome the existing cynicism by making progress in both the culture and composition of the NFL organization.

To be effective in embracing and supporting diversity as an organization, every individual must take ownership of the diversity initiative and strive to make a difference in the culture and behaviors of the NFL while impacting workforce composition and advancement whenever possible, as described below:

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The overall objective of the diversity effort is to create a culturally progressive and socially reflective organization that represents, supports and celebrates diversity at all levels.

We could not agree more. In this day and age, it is imperative that you uphold your moral responsibility to disavow the usage of racial slurs. The usage of the word “redskins” is especially harmful to Native American youth, tending to lower their sense of dignity and self-esteem. It also diminishes feelings of community worth among the Native American tribes and dampens the aspirations of their people.

We look forward to working with you to find a solution to this important matter.

Sincerely,



TOM COLE
Co-Chair
Congressional Native American Caucus



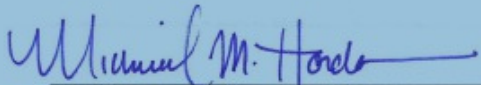
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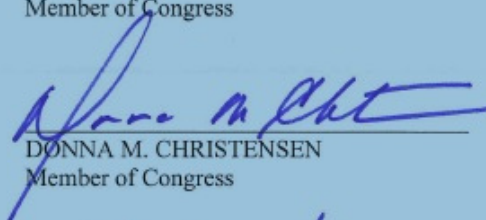
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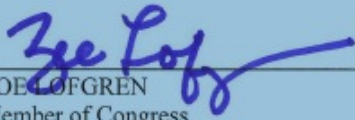
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Member of Congress



ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
Member of Congress



BARBARA LEE
Member of Congress


 ZOE LOFGREN
 Member of Congress


 ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA
 Member of Congress

Enclosure

Mr. Roger S. Goodell, Commissioner – National Football League
 Mr. Frederick W. Smith, President and CEO – FedEx
 Mr. Bill Bidwill, Owner – the Arizona Cardinals
 Mr. Arthur Blank, Owner – Atlanta Falcons
 Mr. Steve Bisciotti, Owner – Baltimore Ravens
 Mr. Ralph Wilson, Owner – Buffalo Bills
 Mr. Jerry Richardson, Owner – Carolina Panthers
 Ms. Virginia Halas McCaskey, Owner – Chicago Bears
 Mr. Mike Brown, Owner – Cincinnati Bengals
 Mr. Jimmy Haslam, Owner – Cleveland Browns
 Mr. Jerry Jones, Owner – Dallas Cowboys
 Mr. Pat Bowlen, Owner – Denver Broncos
 Mr. William Clay Ford, Sr., Owner – Detroit Lions
 Mr. Bob Harlan, President and CEO – Green Bay Packers
 Mr. Robert C. McNair, Owner – Houston Texans
 Mr. Jim Irsay, Owner – Indianapolis Colts
 Mr. Shahid Khan, Owner – Jacksonville Jaguars
 Mr. Clark Hunt, Owner – Kansas City Chiefs
 Mr. Stephen M. Ross, Owner – Miami Dolphins
 Mr. Zygi Wilf, Owner – Minnesota Vikings
 Mr. Robert Kraft, Owner – New England Patriots
 Mr. Tom Benson, Owner – New Orleans Saints
 Mr. John Mara, Owner – New York Giants
 Mr. Steve Tisch, Owner – New York Giants
 Mr. Robert Wood Johnson IV, Owner – New York Jets
 Ms. Carol Davis, Owner – Oakland Raiders
 Mr. Mark Davis, Owner – Oakland Raiders
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 Mr. Malcolm Glazer, Owner – Tampa Bay Buccaneers
 Mr. Bud Adams, Owner – Tennessee Titans

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 13, 2013

Mr. Roger S. Goodell
Commissioner
National Football League
280 Park Ave, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10017

Dear Mr. Goodell:

We are writing to urge you to take a stand against the use of the word “redskin” as the Washington franchise’s name. For decades now, Native American leaders and organizations have been advocating an end to the use of “redskin” as the organization’s “brand” because it is derogatory, demeaning, and offensive.

Native Americans throughout the country consider the term “redskin” a racial, derogatory slur akin to the “N-word” among African Americans or the “W-word” among Latinos. Such offensive epithets would no doubt draw wide-spread disapproval among the NFL’s fan base. Yet the national coverage of Washington’s NFL football team profits from a term that is equally disparaging to Native Americans.

The current Chairman and Chief of the Penobscot Nation, Chief Kirk Francis, recently stated in a joint statement that the term “redskin” is “not just a racial slur or a derogatory term,” but a painful “reminder of one of the most gruesome acts of . . . ethnic cleansing ever committed against the Penobscot people.” The hunting and killing of Penobscot Indians like animals, as declared by Chief Francis, was “a most despicable and disgraceful act of genocide.” Additionally, former officials from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) have stated publicly that the term “redskin” is a racially-stereotyped name that needs to be changed.

In an attempt to correct the long-standing usage of this word, we introduced H.R. 1278, the *Non-Disparagement of Native American Persons or Peoples in Trademark Registration Act of 2013*. This bill (enclosed), introduced on March 20, 2013, would cancel the federal registrations of trademarks using the word “redskin” in reference to Native Americans. The Trademark Act of 1946 requires that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) not register any trademark that “[c]onsists of or comprises . . . matter which may disparage . . . persons, living or dead...or bring them into contempt, or disrepute.” 15 U.S.C. §1502(a). As you may be aware, the PTO has rejected four registration applications that your football franchise has submitted for trademarks which proposed to use the word “redskin” – three times in 1996 and

once in 2002. The PTO denied the applications on grounds that “redskin” is disparaging and obviously a racial slur relative to Native Americans.

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) – the oldest, largest and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization serving tribal governments and communities – has offered its full support for this legislation. We have also received the support of 27 other Native American organizations for H.R. 1278, including the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, the Comanche Nation of Oklahoma, the Oneida Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, the National Indian Education Association, the National Indian Youth Council, the National Indian Child Welfare Association, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, the American Indian College Fund, the National Native American Law Student Association, the Tulsa Indian Coalition Against Racism, the Capitol Area Indian Resources, the American Indian Studies-University of Illinois (Urbana Champaign), the Native American House, the Wisconsin Indian Education Association, the Native Americans at Dartmouth, the Native Americans at Brown, the National Institute for Native Leadership in Higher Education, the Society of American Indian Government Employees, the Native American Journalists Association, the Native American Finance Officers Association, the Indigenous Democratic Network, the Americans for Indian Opportunity, the Indigenous Alliance Without Borders, the International Indian Treaty Council, the First Peoples Worldwide, and the Rio Grande Native American Church.

We appreciate that there are complexities involved with supporting a change of the Washington football team’s name. However, we must also acknowledge that the NFL will never fulfill its “Commitment to Diversity” as long as this racial slur remains a key component of the NFL organization. As stated by the NFL,

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We could not agree more. In this day and age, it is imperative that you, the NFL, and its 31 other member teams uphold their moral responsibility to disavow the usage of racial slurs. The usage of the word "redskins" is especially harmful to Native American youth, tending to lower their sense of dignity and self-esteem. It also diminishes feelings of community worth among the Native American tribes and dampens the aspirations of their people.

We look forward to working with you and members of your organization to find a solution to this important matter.

Sincerely,



TOM COLE
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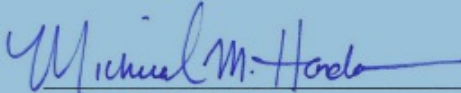
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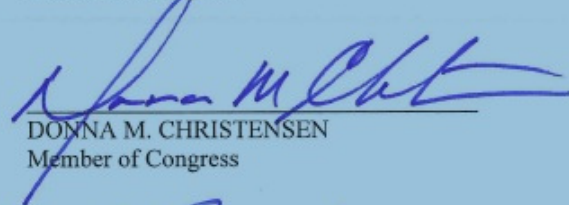
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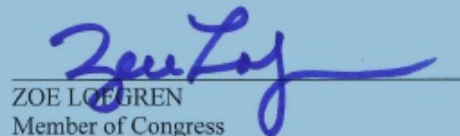
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Enclosure

cc:

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Mr. Bill Bidwill, Owner – the Arizona Cardinals
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Mr. Robert C. McNair, Owner – Houston Texans
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Mr. Tom Benson, Owner – New Orleans Saints
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 13, 2013

Mr. Frederick W. Smith
Chairman and CEO
FedEx
942 South Shady Grove Rd.
Memphis, TN 38120

Dear Mr. Smith:

We are writing to urge you to take a stand against the use of the word “redskin” as the Washington franchise’s name. For decades now, Native American leaders and organizations have been advocating an end to the use of “redskin” as the organization’s “brand” because it is derogatory, demeaning, and offensive.

Native Americans throughout the country consider the term “redskin” a racial, derogatory slur akin to the “N-word” among African Americans or the “W-word” among Latinos. Such offensive epithets would no doubt draw wide-spread disapproval among the NFL’s fan base. Yet the national coverage of Washington’s NFL football team profits from a term that is equally disparaging to Native Americans.

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We appreciate that there are complexities involved with supporting a change of the Washington football team’s name. However, we must also acknowledge that FedEx will never fulfill its “Diversity Mission Statement” as long as it supports this racial slur as the team’s name. As stated by FedEx, “We embrace diversity as essential to our continued success in today’s ever-changing global marketplace. And we value its role in helping us achieve exceptional service for our customers and rewarding opportunities for our employees.”

We could not agree more. In this day and age, it is imperative that FedEx upholds its moral responsibility to disavow the usage of racial slurs. The usage of the word “redskins” is especially harmful to Native American youth, tending to lower their sense of dignity and self-esteem. It also diminishes feelings of community worth among the Native American tribes and dampens the aspirations of their people.

As the Washington football team’s leading sponsor, we urge you to use the fullest extent of your resources to support a change of the team’s name. Inaction on your part would imply complicity and may adversely affect your rewarding relationships with the public and your shareholders.

Sincerely,



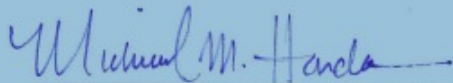
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Co-Chair
Congressional Native American Caucus



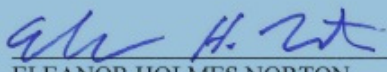
BETTY MCCOLLUM
Co-Chair
Congressional Native American Caucus


 RAUL M. GRIJALVA
 Member of Congress

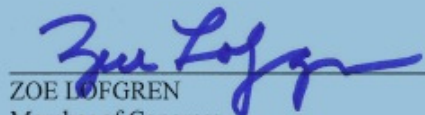

 GWEN MOORE
 Member of Congress


 MICHAEL M. HONDA
 Member of Congress


 DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN
 Member of Congress


 ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
 Member of Congress


 BARBARA LEE
 Member of Congress


 ZOE LOFGREN
 Member of Congress


 ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA
 Member of Congress

Enclosure

cc:

Mr. Dan Snyder, Owner – Washington Redskins
 Mr. Roger S. Goodell, Commissioner – National Football League
 Mr. Bill Bidwill, Owner – the Arizona Cardinals
 Mr. Arthur Blank, Owner – Atlanta Falcons
 Mr. Steve Bisciotti, Owner – Baltimore Ravens
 Mr. Ralph Wilson, Owner – Buffalo Bills
 Mr. Jerry Richardson, Owner – Carolina Panthers
 Ms. Virginia Halas McCaskey, Owner – Chicago Bears
 Mr. Mike Brown, Owner – Cincinnati Bengals
 Mr. Jimmy Haslam, Owner – Cleveland Browns
 Mr. Jerry Jones, Owner – Dallas Cowboys
 Mr. Pat Bowlen, Owner – Denver Broncos
 Mr. William Clay Ford, Sr., Owner – Detroit Lions
 Mr. Bob Harlan, President and CEO – Green Bay Packers
 Mr. Robert C. McNair, Owner – Houston Texans
 Mr. Jim Irsay, Owner – Indianapolis Colts
 Mr. Shahid Khan, Owner – Jacksonville Jaguars
 Mr. Clark Hunt, Owner – Kansas City Chiefs
 Mr. Stephen M. Ross, Owner – Miami Dolphins

Mr. Zygi Wilf, Owner – Minnesota Vikings
Mr. Robert Kraft, Owner – New England Patriots
Mr. Tom Benson, Owner – New Orleans Saints
Mr. John Mara, Owner – New York Giants
Mr. Steve Tisch, Owner – New York Giants
Mr. Robert Wood Johnson IV, Owner – New York Jets
Ms. Carol Davis, Owner – Oakland Raiders
Mr. Mark Davis, Owner – Oakland Raiders
Mr. Jeffrey Lurie, Owner – Philadelphia Eagles
Mr. Dan Rooney, Owner – Pittsburgh Steelers
Mr. Alex Spanos, Owner – San Diego Chargers
Mr. Jed York, Owner – San Francisco 49ers
Mr. Paul Allen, Owner – Seattle Seahawks
Mr. Stan Kroenke, Owner – St. Louis Rams
Mr. Malcolm Glazer, Owner – Tampa Bay Buccaneers
Mr. Bud Adams, Owner – Tennessee Titans

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