

# Native American Rights Fund

## Indigenous Peoples' Rights

**<https://www.narf.org/narf-ends-fedex-service-over-fedexs-sponsorship-of-the-washington-nfl-football-team/>**

## Campaign and Advocacy

The Native American Rights Fund (NARF) has chosen to end its relationship with the FedEx Corporation for all of our mailings. As NARF's letter to FedEx informing it of the decision states, [i]n good conscience, NARF can no longer support our use of FedEx as our primary carrier given FedEx's support of the Washington NFL team and its mascot, which continue[s] to contribute to the defamation of our people and contributes to the perpetual harm done to our people and especially our children.

For over twenty years, NARF has publicly denounced use of the Washington NFL football team's name, supporting and participating directly in various legislative and litigation efforts to put an end to use of this offensive term. NARF has long worked, and will continue to work, to put an end to this racial slur masquerading as a team name. NARF has replaced FedEx with another carrier because as our letter states we can no longer justify using our funds to help FedEx perpetuate this racial stereotype.

NARF is encouraging other Native organizations, tribes, tribal enterprises, and individuals to cease doing business with any and all corporations that sponsor the Washington NFL team. We also encourage these corporations to do the right thing and remove their sponsorship until the time that the Washington NFL team changes its name.

To read the full text of NARF's letter to FedEx, see below.

May 8, 2015

FedEx Corporate Offices  
Three Galleria Tower  
13155 Noel Road, Suite 1600  
Dallas, TX 75240

To Whom It May Concern:

For decades, the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) has primarily used the services of the FedEx Corporation for our mailings. In good conscience, NARF can no longer support our use of FedEx as our primary carrier. The FedEx Corporation's support of the Washington NFL team has continued to contribute to the defamation of our people and contributes to the perpetual harm done to our people and especially our children. We have officially moved to replace FedEx with another carrier as we can no longer justify using our funds to help FedEx perpetuate this racial stereotype.

Addressing the issue of harmful Indian mascots in the NFL and in other sports institutions is not a matter of political correctness. Instead, it is a matter of racial equality and justice and requires the courage of society to stand up against a perceived accepted norm and overcome racism.

The term redskins is not and has never been one of honor or respect, but instead, it has always been and continues to be a pejorative, derogatory, denigrating, offensive, scandalous, contemptuous, disreputable, disparaging, and racist designation for Native American. The term originates from a time when Native people were actively hunted and killed for bounties, and their skins were used as proof of Indian kill.

Beginning in 1968, just one year after the Washington NFL team's trademark was registered the National Congress of American Indians (representing more than 250 tribes) and the Native community began a campaign to eliminate negative stereotypes of Native peoples in popular culture. Since that time, the Native community had tried everything possible to convince the Washington team to voluntarily change its name, sending the team owner letters and offering options for the team to make changes to right the wrong. The vast majority of the 566 tribes in this country, every major Native American organization, the United Nations, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, other civil rights organizations and numerous church groups have condemned the use of this term. The r-word is widely recognized throughout the world as a racial slur.

For over twenty years, NARF has publicly denounced the use of the name of the Washington NFL football franchise, supporting and participating directly in various legislative and litigation efforts to put an end to use of this offensive name. NARF does not advocate, nor has it ever advocated, for the use of the name used by the Washington NFL football team. Race-based stereotyping and behaviors in sports persist today, including, in particular, the racially derogatory name of the Washington professional football organization. NARF has long worked, and will continue to work, to put an end to this racial slur masquerading as a team name.

NARF is also encouraging other Native organizations, tribes, tribal enterprises and individuals to cease doing business with any and all corporations that sponsor the Washington NFL franchise and we also encourage these corporations to do the right thing and remove their sponsorship until the time that the Washington NFL franchise changes its name.

Sincerely,

John E. Echohawk

Executive Director

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