

1 AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

2 November 5, 2013
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10 A PROPOSED RESOLUTION
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16 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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21 To declare the sense of the Council that the Washington National Football League Team change
22 its name.
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24 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this
25 resolution may be cited as the “Sense of the Council to Rename the Washington National Football
26 League Team Resolution of 2013”.

27 Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia finds that:

28 (1) In 1992, eight members of the Council of the District of Columbia introduced a resolution
29 (PR 9-330) requesting a change in the name of Washington’s NFL football team. In 2001, the
30 Council adopted a resolution (R14-263) requesting a change in the team’s name. On May 1, 2013,
31 nine members of the current Council introduced the present resolution.

32 (2) For more than 80 years, the Washington National Football League (NFL) team has
33 brought great pride and joy to the Metropolitan Washington area.

1 (3) The word “redskins” is objectionable to many Americans who consider it to be racist and
2 derogatory, and the use of the term is increasingly considered to be insensitive in our multi-cultural
3 society.

4 (4) A quick survey of dictionaries demonstrates this evolution in the meaning of the word.
5 The 1964 edition of the *Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language* defined
6 “redskin” to mean: “A North American Indian.” The 1983 edition of the *Webster’s Ninth New*
7 *Collegiate Dictionary* defines “redskin” to mean: “American Indian – usually taken to be offensive.”
8 The 1983 edition of the Random House Dictionary of the English Language Second Edition
9 Unabridged defines “redskin” to mean: “*Slang (often disparaging and offensive)* A North American
10 Indian.”

11 (5) Some believe that the term “redskins” was derived during a time in our nation when a
12 bounty was offered on Native Americans, those killed by the bounty hunters were scalped as proof of
13 their slaughter, and bounty hunters began referring to the scalps of the dead Native Americans as
14 “redskins.”

15 (6) By Resolution 43-01, adopted on November 14, 2001, the Board of Directors of the
16 Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments found that “the term ‘Redskins’ is viewed by
17 many sensitive and progressive-minded individuals as a demeaning and dehumanizing racist insult
18 that embodies a history of degradation and slaughter.”

19 (7) In recent years, prominent sports writers such as Peter King have urged using a name
20 different than “Redskins” for the name of a sports team. Most recently, NBC announcer Bob Costas
21 urged a name change for the Washington NFL team: “...think for a moment about the term
22 ‘Redskins,’ and how it truly differs from all the others. Ask yourself what the equivalent would be, if
23 directed toward African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, or members of any other ethnic group. When

1 considered that way, ‘Redskins’ can’t possibly honor a heritage, or noble character trait, nor can it
2 possibly be considered a neutral term. It’s an insult, a slur, no matter how benign the present-day
3 intent.”

4 (8) A number of sports teams have changed names that reference Native Americans. St.
5 John’s (New York) changed its mascot from the Redmen to the Red Storm, and the Miami University
6 (Ohio) Redskins are now the Red Hawks – to list two among many.

7 (9) On October 15, 2013, the Anti-Defamation League called on professional sports teams to
8 “seriously consider moving away from the use of hurtful and offensive names, mascots and logos,”
9 and specifically cited the Washington Redskins.

10 (10) Ten days earlier, President Barack Obama said he would consider changing the
11 Washington NFL team’s name if he owned the football team, saying such names offend “a sizable
12 group of people.” He further added: “I don’t know whether our attachment to a particular name
13 should override the real legitimate concerns that people have about these things.”

14 (11) Changing the long-standing name of the professional sports team might have an
15 economic cost—the cost of losing a well-known brand. However, profit should not trump doing what
16 is morally right.

17 (12) In 1995, Abe Pollin, the owner of Washington’s professional basketball team, announced
18 he was changing the team’s name because the word “bullets” was associated with violence, an
19 association with which he was uncomfortable in part because of the high number of homicides and
20 gun-related violence at that time in Washington, D.C. As a result, the team’s name was changed.

21 (13) Last month the San Francisco Chronicle joined a growing list of publications that no
22 longer use the word “redskins” when referring to Washington’s National Football League team.

1 Other publications include the Portland Oregonian, Kansas City Star, Slate.com, Washington City
2 Paper, and Richmond Free Press.

3 (14) The Council of the District of Columbia is in an important position to acknowledge the
4 controversy over our local NFL team's name, and to urge the football team's owners to end the
5 controversy and rectify what many believe to be an insult by changing the name of the Washington
6 NFL team.

7 Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council that:

8 (1) Out of respect for the multi-racial and cultural makeup of this nation, our city, and the
9 team's fans, the Washington NFL team should change its name;

10 (2) Changing the name of a National Football League franchise, while not a simple task, is the
11 right and prudent thing to do in this case; and

12 (3) The owner of the Washington NFL team is hereby urged to change the name of the
13 football team to a name that is not offensive to Native Americans or any other ethnic group.

14 Sec. 4. The Chairman of the Council shall transmit copies of this resolution to the principal
15 owner of the Washington NFL football team, Dan Snyder, and to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell.

16 Sec. 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

17 ~~To declare the sense of the Council of the District of Columbia that the local Professional~~
18 ~~Football Club immediately change its designation so as to avoid using the derogatory~~
19 ~~identification or nickname of "Washington Redskins."~~

20 ~~RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this~~
21 ~~resolution be cited as the "Sense of the Council to Rename the Washington Football Club~~
22 ~~Resolution of 2013".~~

23 ~~Sec. 2. The Council finds that:~~

24 ~~(1) District residents and their elected representatives should not tolerate~~
25 ~~commercial or other use of derogatory terminology relating to any people's racial identity, or~~
26 ~~which dishonors any person's race, or which dishonors the name Washington.~~

27 ~~(2) The name "Washington Redskins" was adopted and endorsed by the~~
28 ~~Washington Football Club's successive owners notwithstanding it being derogatory, particularly~~
29 ~~as used in the District, with the foreseeable effect of insulting and debasing people of American~~
30 ~~Indian descent, as well as the Nation's Capitol, this City of Washington, D.C.~~

1 ~~_____ (3) Since 1791, the beginning of our Republic, by passage of the Residence Act,~~
2 ~~the name Washington has served to honor the first President of the United States.~~

3 ~~_____ (4) Washington's name has been dishonored by association with the word~~
4 ~~"Redskins," which has twice been declared derogatory by the Office of Trademark and~~
5 ~~Copyrights, and therefore unworthy of U.S. Trademark status and protection.~~

6 ~~_____ (5) Being aware of national standards, colleges and universities have been~~
7 ~~sanitizing First Nation names and mascots, and high schools are abandoning the derogatory~~
8 ~~name, e.g., "Rickards Redskins" changed to "Rickards Raiders" and "Huntley Redskins"~~
9 ~~changed to "Huntley Red Raiders," with Cooperstown's high school abandoning the name.~~

10 ~~_____ (6) The Council is empowered to educate, inform, and counsel team owner Dan~~
11 ~~Snyder, National Football League Commissioner Roger Goodell, the National Football League~~
12 ~~Partnership and its Partners, of their unacknowledged duty to accept national standards and~~
13 ~~change the name both for the sake of decency, and to rectify this ongoing insult to America's~~
14 ~~First Nations, to the District, and to the memory of President Washington.~~

15 ~~_____ Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council that:~~

16 ~~_____ (1) Dan Snyder, as principal owner of the Washington Football Club, Roger~~
17 ~~Goodell, as Commissioner of the National Football League, the National Football League and its~~
18 ~~Partners should change the name of the Washington Foot Club to a name that is not derogatory,~~
19 ~~demeaning, or dishonoring of America's First Nations, and of Washington, D.C. For example, in~~
20 ~~honor of the Tuskegee Airmen, the "Washington Redtails."~~

21 ~~_____ (2) Because it is well known in America and in Nations afar that American~~
22 ~~Indians have experienced utmost suffering and disrespect over many years, and that a change of~~
23 ~~name by Dan Snyder as Owner, Roger Goodell as Commissioner, and the National Football~~
24 ~~League as a Partnership is essential to return to the American Indian Community a modicum of~~
25 ~~decency and respect that they and the Council demand, and to which each and every Native~~
26 ~~American and resident of Washington, D.C., are entitled.~~

27 ~~_____ Sec. 4. Transmittal.~~

28 ~~_____ The Secretary shall transmit a copy of this Resolution, upon its adoption, to~~
29 ~~the President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of the House of~~
30 ~~Representatives, the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the~~
31 ~~United States Senate, the Minority Leader of the United States Senate, the D.C. Delegate in the~~
32 ~~House of Representative, D.C.'s Shadow Senator, Owner Dan Snyder, Commissioner Roger~~
33 ~~Goodell, and to each Partner of the National Football League.~~

34 ~~_____ Sec. 5. Effective date.~~

35 ~~_____ This resolution shall take effect upon the first day of publication in the District of~~
36 ~~Columbia Register.~~