



March 25, 2015

Assemblymember Alejo
California State Capitol, Room 2117
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 30 (Alejo): California Racial Mascots Act
AAP-CA POSITION: SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Alejo,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California, representing the 5,000 board-certified pediatrician members of all four California AAP regional chapters statewide (Ch 1 – Northern California, Ch 2 – Greater Los Angeles, Ch 3 – San Diego, and Ch 4 – Orange County), strongly supports your proposed legislation AB 30 (Alejo). This bill would establish the California Racial Mascots Act, which would prohibit public schools from using the term Redskins as a school or athletic team name, mascot, or nickname beginning January 1, 2017, subject to specified exceptions.

The use of the R-word as a team mascot began in an era when racism and bigotry were deemed acceptable. Once used to describe Native Americans scalps sold for a bounty, current use of the R-word is widely recognized as a racial slur that promotes discrimination against Native Americans. Furthermore, recent studies have recognized the negative psychological impacts stereotyping has on individuals and groups. Recently, social movements to eliminate such harmful lexicons have gained momentum.

Native American groups representing tribes all over the United States have joined the Change the Mascot campaign – a grassroots campaign launched to encourage the removal of disparaging team names and mascots. The campaign has specifically targeted the use of the R-word by the Washington D.C. NFL team. President Barack Obama, 50 U.S. Senators, civil rights leaders, entertainment icons, organizations, and prominent public figures have all voiced their support.

Using a racial slur as a mascot is hurtful and degrading to the people it portrays. No school has a cognizable interest in retaining a racially derogatory team name. AB 30 takes up where prior legislation left off, continuing the efforts to remove this disparaging mascot from our public schools.

Pediatricians strongly support AB 30 and thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of children across California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a horizontal line that extends to the right and then curves slightly downwards at the end.

Sarah Morgan
Policy Analyst
American Academy of Pediatrics, California District