

To: Mark Emmert, President, NCAA
G. P. (Bud) Peterson, Chair, NCAA Board of Governors and President, Georgia Institute of Technology
Michael Drake, Chair-elect, NCAA Board of Governors and President, The Ohio State University

Date: July 22, 2019

Dear President Emmert, President Peterson and President Drake,

We are writing to inform you the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) is in violation of the NCAA policy on the use of Native American mascots, imagery and culture in intercollegiate athletics. We believe this conduct of UIUC violates four NCAA Constitution principles that reference Institutional Control and Responsibility (Article 2.1), Cultural Diversity and Gender Equity (Article 2.2.2), Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct (Article 2.4), and Nondiscrimination (Article 2.6).

We maintain, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign:

- Continues to use racial/ethnic references in their intercollegiate athletic programs, in violation of NCAA recommendations,
- Fails to promote the NCAA's core values pertaining to cultural diversity, ethical sportsmanship and nondiscrimination and fails to take proactive steps at NCAA events through institutional event management to enhance the integrity of intercollegiate athletics related to these issues,
- Has refused to educate its constituencies on the negative impact of hostile or abusive Native American symbols, names and imagery, in violation of NCAA recommendations,
- Has publicly endorsed hostile and abusive depictions of American Indians as sports mascots,
- Continues to market the Chief Illiniwek logo in excess of any legal requirement to maintain logo ownership,
- Continues to use the terms "Illini" and "Fighting Illini" as references to Native Americans, in violation of NCAA recommendations,
- Has failed to enforce its ownership rights to Chief Illiniwek, Chief and Illiniwek, allowing their widespread use,
- Selectively enforces university regulations regarding the use of university athletic facilities, allowing violations by Illiniwek supporters and facilitating access and efforts of those who would maintain the university's use of Native American stereotypes, imagery and mascots,
- Facilitates performances of Chief Illiniwek at NCAA events, in violation of NCAA recommendations,
- Ignores the recommendations of appointed and elected UIUC student and faculty governing bodies that encourage establishing a new sports mascot.

Moreover, in spite of the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma having made clear, "Chief Illiniwek does not ... honor the heritage of the Peoria Tribe ... and is a degrading racial stereotype that reflects negatively on all American Indian people," University of Illinois Trustees and administrators continue to seek their favor. As you know, endorsement by the Peoria Tribe could allow the university to reinstate its mascot Chief Illiniwek.

And moreover, in response to the UIUC Chancellor and Athletic Director recently ending the university band playing its faux Indian "War Chant" at NCAA events, the University of Illinois Board of Trustees severely reprimanded them. Undoubtedly, this has had a chilling effect on further compliance by the university with NCAA policies governing the use of Native American mascots, imagery and culture.

We have explored all known avenues within the University of Illinois to resolve these issues, yet they persist. We sincerely regret having to bring these violations to the NCAA, but we have no option but to refer this matter to you. Please know, we are prepared to provide supportive documentation and work with you to encourage the university to comply with the NCAA's Constitution, principles and dedication to promoting racial justice in intercollegiate athletics.

Lastly, whereas the Native American Mascot Policy adopted by the NCAA Executive Committee August 2005 states:

"Effective February 1, 2006, institutions with hostile and abusive racial/ethnic/national origin mascots, nicknames or imagery will be prohibited from hosting any NCAA national championship competition."

We urge the NCAA to immediately prohibit the University of Illinois from hosting any NCAA national championship competition until the university fully complies with this policy.

Very truly yours,

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