

Resolution No. 552-2020

Council Member B. Jones

AN EMERGENCY RESOLUTION
Urging the Cleveland Indians to change their
baseball team name.

WHEREAS, the Cleveland Indians team name, held since 1915, is considered offensive by many Native Americans, who oppose their heritage's being used as a sports team identity, and fans with growing racial awareness in 2020 America; and

WHEREAS, American society is undergoing a wide uprising over police brutality and systemic racism after the killing of George Floyd in police custody, a widespread movement that has led to a reconsideration of statues, flags, symbols and mascots considered to be racist or celebrating racist history; and

WHEREAS, the Cleveland Indians leadership recently stated that "...recent unrest in our community and our country has only underscored the need for us to keep improving as an organization on issues of social justice. With that in mind, we are committed to engaging our community and appropriate stakeholders to determine the best path forward with regard to our team name."; and

WHEREAS, this commitment followed the Washington Redskins, National Football League team, announcing that their team will undergo a thorough review of the team's name, after receiving requests from their corporate sponsors, including Fed Ex and Bank of America, to change the team name; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans, Native American activists like Suzan Shown Harjo, and the American Psychological Association have long advocated for sports teams to change American Indian names and mascots; and

WHEREAS, using the term "Indians" in reference to Native Americans is a misnomer, and changing the name would acknowledge the history of exploitation and discrimination of Native Americans in America; and

WHEREAS, this Council acknowledges that the Cleveland Indians phased out using the controversial Chief Wahoo mascot last year; and

WHEREAS, this Council recognizes that the Cleveland Indians have begun discussing the possibility of changing their team name, and urges them to do so; and

WHEREAS, this resolution constitutes an emergency measure for the immediate preservation of public peace, property, health or safety, now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CLEVELAND:

Section 1. That this Council urges the Cleveland Indians to change their baseball team name.

Section 2. That the Clerk of Council is directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Cleveland Indians, Paul Dolan, Owner.

Section 3. That this resolution is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and, provided it receives the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to Council, it shall take effect and be in force immediately upon its adoption and approval by the Mayor; otherwise it shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

