

December 8, 2020

Dear EssilorLuxottica:

We are writing to urge your company to terminate its business and public relationships with professional sports teams that do not stop using names and racist branding based on Native American stereotypes. With the July decision of the Washington Football Team to stop using the name “Redsk-ns” and the accompanying logo at the urging of investors and many other stakeholders, attention is now turning to other teams. We believe this attention presents risks for your company if it does not take steps to change the names of the Major League Baseball Association’s Atlanta Braves, as well as the National Football League’s Kansas City Chiefs. **In particular, this time calls on the company to live up to the social values that the company has professed.**

It is important, however, that this statement be followed with action. As we saw recently with the Washington Football Team, Nike, FedEx, Pepsi, and Bank of America all took important steps to convey to the team the importance of changing its name and logo. At its most forceful it included threats to legally challenge the team’s adherence to contractual arrangements. On July 3, when FedEx released a statement in support of the Washington Football Team’s name change, it was only hours before Nike removed its online merchandise. A July 6 letter to the National Football League from Native leaders articulated the harmful use of Native mascots to the health and well-being of the Native community and demonstrated wide consensus among Native peoples. With 14 initial signatories, this letter garnered nearly 1500 additional endorsements by advocates and organizations. That same day, Walmart, Dick’s and Target removed team merchandise from its stores. On July 8, Amazon notified its sellers that it would begin pulling that merchandise from the site. These actions happened less than a week after the team announced its review of the name.

This is the type of leadership we are calling on from your company. Your relationship to teams that currently utilize the racist and harmful names and branding can be leveraged to call for immediate and necessary change.

It is heartening to see the outpouring of company statements and future-looking programs addressing systemic racism that have emerged. The actions being taken are wide ranging from workplace diversity to public policy. One specific action has been the evaluation of racist symbols and stereotypes. For example, we have seen the rebranding of consumer products that are offensive such as Pepsi’s decision to sunset their Aunt Jemima brand and Land O’Lakes removing the “Native American” woman image from its packaging. Many companies have distanced themselves from names and symbols disparaging of Native peoples, including Anheuser-Busch, Philip Morris, Coca-Cola, Denny’s, and Miller Brewing. **Your company must not only distance itself from these names and racist branding, but urge others to do the same.**

Thus it is timely and urgent for your company to review its own business relationships with the Major League Baseball Association, the National Football League given the racist team names

still in use by the Atlanta Braves and the Kansas City Chiefs. As retailers of the merchandise of these teams, you can either continue perpetuating these racist names and branding or you can take this opportunity to demand change.

Virtually every major national American Indian organization has denounced use of Indian and Native related images, names and symbols disparaging or offending American Indian peoples, with over 2,000 academic institutions eliminating “Indian” sports references. They are symbols that loudly and clearly signals that Native Americans are not worthy of respect. This bears out in all arenas of life, from the doctor’s office where

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