

# CALL TO ACTION! Co-sponsors needed for SD.937 and HD.3645 - An Act Prohibiting the Use of Native American Mascots by Public Schools in the Commonwealth

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Please meet with, call, or email your state representative and state senator and ask them to **co-sponsor SD.937 and HD.3645**. (Deadline for House members to co-sponsor: Feb. 1!) If possible, relay a personal anecdote about how you or someone you know has been harmed by Native American mascots.

To find your own senator and representative: <https://malegislature.gov/Search/FindMyLegislator>

## Sample Email/Letter Template/Talking points

Dear Senator/Dear Representative:

I am a resident of **(town)**. I am writing to ask you to co-sponsor SD.937 and HD.3645 “An Act Prohibiting the Use of Native American Mascots by Public Schools in the Commonwealth.” I am **(a parent, teacher, therapist, of indigenous descent, etc.)** and this issue concerns me because **(specific reason/s)**.

Decades of social science research have shown that Native American mascots have serious social and emotional consequences for Native American youth, including low self-esteem, less future aspiration, and anxiety. For non-Native people, they promote a false understanding of Native Americans, normalize culturally insensitive behaviors, and make them more likely to internalize stereotypes of racial minorities. The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the country’s largest Native American advocacy group, has been fighting to eliminate Native American mascots since the 1960s. Currently over 115 tribal, government, education, professional, civil rights, and religious organizations in the United States have recognized the negative health impacts of Native American mascots and called for their elimination. In Massachusetts, this includes the Chappaquiddick Tribe of the Wampanoag Nation, Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe, Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, and Nipmuc Nation. Organizations in Massachusetts include Cultural Survival, Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness, Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs, Massachusetts Teachers Association, North American Indian Center of Boston, and United American Indians of New England. In addition to NCAI, national organizations include the National Education Association, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, the American Psychological Association, the American Anthropological Association, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

In a 2001 resolution, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights stated that “the use of stereotypical images of Native Americans by educational institutions has the potential to create a racially hostile educational environment that may be intimidating to Indian students.” Many school districts that have been confronted with this issue fear community backlash and so fail to take a stand. Civil rights issues must be addressed at the state level. SD.937 and HD.3645 will be a first step towards ending this harmful discrimination in our Massachusetts public schools.

**(Include additional thoughts about how you would like to see the process move forward.)** I hope you will agree that Native American mascots have no place in our public schools. Thank you for your considering co-sponsoring this legislation.

Sincerely,  
**(your name)**  
**(address, phone, email)**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:** <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/SD937>  
<https://www.facebook.com/massmascotcoalition/>  
Email: [massmascotcoalition@gmail.com](mailto:massmascotcoalition@gmail.com)