

Vote NO on SB 215

From the Oregon Indian Education Association comes this account of how a Native American student in Oregon feels “**alienated**” and “**objectified**” when faced with race-based Indian mascots. Dakota Daniels says her “**civil rights will continue to be violated**” if a local Tribe is allowed to approve a race-based Indian Mascot:

Press Release: For Immediate Release—April 9, 2013

Native American Students & Families Call Foul: Race-Based Sports Names a Violation of Their Educational Civil Rights

A few legislators in the Oregon House and Senate are trying to move forward a proposed bill that attempts to alter Oregon’s law preventing discriminatory race-based athletic nicknames in K-12 schools. **Senator Jeff Kruse** (R-Roseburg), a sponsor of one of those bills said in hearing, he is “a lifelong proud Roseburg ‘Indian’” and that he doesn’t think this is a “real issue”. For Native American Students and Parents, this issue couldn’t be more real.

“I feel alienated in my own school hallways”, says **Dakota Daniels**. **Dakota** is a Junior at Sprague High School in Salem and is on the varsity cheerleading team. Every time her school plays the Roseburg ‘Indians’ the environment that race-based athletic nicknames create in her school, “...makes me feel objectified”. **Dakota** is not alone. According to the Oregon Department of Education there were over fifty scientific studies that confirm her experience which lead State Board of Education to ban their use in K-12 Schools last spring.

The Oregon Department of Education reports over 9,500 American Indian/Alaska Native students attend Oregon Schools, and officials at the Salem-Kaizer Indian Education Program, where **Dakota** lives, enroll students from over 90 different Tribes from all across the nation.

Dakota is from the Blackfeet Nation in Montana. Under the language any of the proposed bills she would still repeatedly be expected to confront the ‘Indians’, ‘Warriors’, any image or representation a local Tribe ‘approves’ she says, “My civil rights will continue to be violated. If a Tribe local to one of the schools approves a mascot, I still have to deal with it.”

- Submitted by Susan Hansen, Molalla, Oregon, as evidence that Native American students’ civil rights would not be served by letting a local Tribe be the sole decider about Indian mascots.