



GREAT LAKES INTER-TRIBAL COUNCIL, INC.

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For Immediate Release

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Michael Allen, Executive Director of the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, an organization of 12 federally recognized Indian tribes located in Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, called on Governor Scott Walker to exercise his veto power on AB 297. The bill modifies the existing procedure for registering a complaint about race-based school mascots, logos and nicknames, requiring a minimum number of signatures equivalent to 10% of a school district's population, reversing the current burden of proof, and removing the Department of Public Instruction from the hearing process. Native American tribes across the state have objected to the use of Native American depictions and names as sports mascots and logos, and the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council has published its position in favor of prohibiting Native-themed school logos and mascots for being psychologically harmful to Native and non-Native children alike. If the Governor fails to act on the bill, it will become law.

“Governor Walker has already publicly criticized the proposed bill as being ‘convoluted’ and a ‘weird hybrid’, and has pointed out that it does nothing to advance the state’s agenda for jobs and health care reform, which are his highest priorities. No other existing political, racial, or ethnic group would or should tolerate being trivialized or boxed in by ignorant, one-dimensional notions about their culture or personalities. As the Governor explores possibly becoming a candidate for national office, he should weigh the consequences of tacitly agreeing to this throwback proposal.” Allen said.

For more information

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