



PECHANGA INDIAN RESERVATION
Temecula Band of Luiseño Mission Indians

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February 5, 2008

The Honorable Nick Rahall
Chairman, House Committee on Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Rahall:

On behalf of the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians, I am writing to express our strong opposition to H.R. 2176 and H.R. 4115, two pieces of legislation that would allow two tribes in Michigan to conduct off-reservation gaming hundreds of miles from their reservations and in the treaty territory of another tribe.

Mr. Chairman, our tribe strongly opposes off-reservation gaming, particularly when it is conducted in the lands of another tribe. It is our understanding that these bills would allow two tribes to settle a proposed land claim and build casinos several hundred miles from their reservations and from the site of the proposed land claim. This would be the first time Congress has ever passed off-reservation gaming legislation and it would only encourage tribes from all over the country to come to Congress to seek casinos far from their reservations.

This is an issue that not only affects tribes in Michigan, but it also impacts those tribes like ours who oppose off-reservation gaming. We believe this type of off-reservation gaming undermines the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act and could erode public support for Indian gaming. By exploiting the land claim exception in the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, these bills would set a dangerous precedent that would have a lasting negative impact on Indian gaming.

If Congress were to pass these bills, it would mark the first time in history that a tribal/state gaming compact would be approved by federal legislation. We understand that the House Committee on Resources is preparing to conduct another hearing on these bills in the near future. We believe that Congress should reject any attempt to allow tribes to conduct off-reservation gaming in the ancestral lands of another tribe. If Congress were ever to pass these bills, it will open the floodgates to more of these questionable gaming projects across the country.

Again, we strongly urge the House Resources Committee to reject H.R. 2176 and H.R. 4115 because they are detrimental to the future of Indian gaming in this country.

Sincerely,

Mark Macarro
Tribal Chairman

Cc: Senate Committee on Indian Affairs