

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

**JOIN OPPOSITION TO OFF-RESERVATION INDIAN GAMING**

June 4, 2008

Dear Colleague:

We urge you to join us and **VOTE NO** on H.R. 2176 and H.R. 4115. These bills would authorize the largest expansion of off-reservation gaming in the history of Indian gaming. Further, the two bills would create a dangerous precedent by allowing Congress to approve off-reservation Indian gaming on casinos located over 350 miles from their Tribal lands. The Judiciary Committee reviewed both bills and voted unanimously to oppose them.

**1) Congress has never authorized an off-reservation Indian casino.** These bills would set a dangerous precedent by authorizing two Michigan Tribes, the Bay Mills Indian Community and the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, to exploit the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) and build two casinos located over 350 miles from their respective reservations. Congress has never authorized such a wide expansion of Indian gaming. IGRA is not intended to allow Tribes to build casinos hundreds of miles from their reservations. We believe that Congress should not be in the business of circumventing IGRA and the Department of the Interior by approving the development of specific Indian casinos.


**2) The land claims are invalid.** The Bay Mills Tribe has failed in both federal and state court to demonstrate valid ties to the land where they want to build their casino. The state court case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court where it was denied certiorari. In fact, not one federal government agency has validated their land claim. One can only imagine what would happen if Congress were to start approving Indian casinos, hundreds of miles off reservation, for land claims that have been rejected by the courts. It would be an invitation to Tribes across the country to line up outside our doors seeking a casino wherever they see fit. That is not sound public policy.

**3) The Department of Interior opposes these bills.** The Department of the Interior is opposed to this legislation because it circumvents the Department's well-established procedures for evaluating the impact of a land transfer before it is approved. Congress should not approve any legislation that intentionally undermines such a review process. The Department also has found that the bills circumvent several provisions of the Michigan Tribal gaming compacts, including one provision that severely restricts off-reservation gaming.

These bills are clearly bad federal policy and set a dangerous precedent for Indian gaming. We urge you to vote **NO** on these off-reservation casinos should this legislation be considered on the House floor.

Sincerely,

  
Mike Rogers  
Member of Congress

  
Lamar Smith  
Member of Congress

  
Darrell Issa  
Member of Congress

  
Steve King  
Member of Congress