



Helping Families Thrive

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June 20, 2008

Member of Congress
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative,

On behalf of millions of citizens represented by Focus on the Family, we urge you to protect the rights of families and property owners nationwide against the increasing practice of tribal off-reservation gambling expansion. Secretary Kempthorne already established a precedent restricting off-reservation casinos in January of 2008, rejecting nearly a dozen off-reservation casino applications. Tribal gambling interests are responding by circumventing the Department of the Interior's (DOI) authority and going directly to the U.S. Congress.

Two bills are coming to the House floor for a vote: H.R. 2176 and H.R. 4115, pushed by two Michigan tribes—Bay Mills Indian Community and Sault Ste. Marie. Previous rulings in both state and federal courts have rejected these tribes' off-reservation land claims; regardless, they are now petitioning Congress. If passed, these bills will open the floodgates for other tribal gambling interests to:

- Further exploit the original intent of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA, Sec. 20)
- Access non-reservation lands for the purpose of building tribal casinos
- Bypass the Department of the Interior's authority, violating IGRA mandates and procedures
- Allow United Auto Workers' union to "voter card check" casino workers and intimidate them
- Impose unwanted tribal casinos upon citizens in distant, off-reservation locations anywhere they wish
- Burden the U.S. Congress to act in place of the DOI regarding off-reservation gambling applications

In 2005, Representative Pombo calculated that 38 Indian gambling operations – out of 405 – were off-reservation casinos. Today, Native Americans represent approximately one percent of the total U.S. population, while tribal casinos take in more than \$25 billion annually in gross gambling revenues.

Families throughout America are saying, "Enough!" Tribal gambling expansion—particularly applications for off-reservation casinos—must be held in check. We cannot allow wealthy, unaccountable tribal gambling interests to destroy more communities and families that never even get to vote on tribal casinos.

Please oppose H.R. 2176 and H.R. 4115. America's families need your protection and support today!

Sincerely,

Tom Minnery
Senior Vice President
Government and Public Policy