

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 3, 2009

The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20241

Dear Secretary Salazar:

It has come to our attention that the Department of Interior is currently reviewing its administrative policies relating to federal acquisition of lands taken into trust for Indian gaming purposes. We are writing to express our concerns with existing Department policies that allows Tribes to acquire lands for gaming purposes outside their ancestral territory.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of Tribes seeking to acquire lands to build off-reservation casinos. Many of these applications are from Tribes seeking lands that are far from their existing reservations and outside their ancestral and historical territory. We believe this is contrary to an underlying purpose of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), which was designed to encourage reservation-based economic development and the creation of local jobs for tribal communities. We understand that a large number of Indian Tribes from across the country share this view and have written you expressing their concern on this issue.

The Department's current interpretation of IGRA seems to allow this type of activity to occur. Thus, we strongly encourage you to review these policies and regulations in order to bring a more reasonable approach to federal land acquisition for Indian gaming purposes.

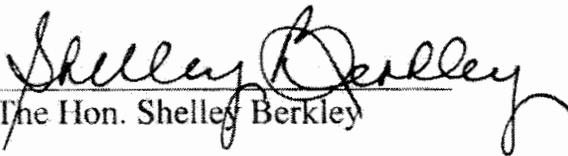
We thank you for your consideration of these requests and look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Secretary Salazar
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The Hon. Carolyn C. Kilpatrick

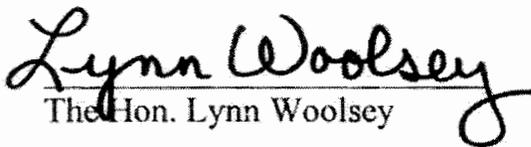

The Hon. Kevin McCarthy

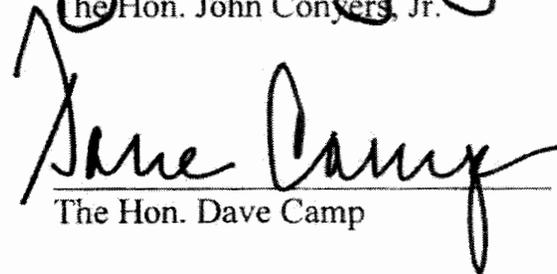

The Hon. Shelley Berkley


The Hon. Mike Rogers (MI)


The Hon. Mark H. Schauer


The Hon. John Conyers, Jr.

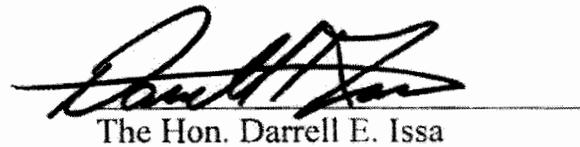

The Hon. Lynn Woolsey

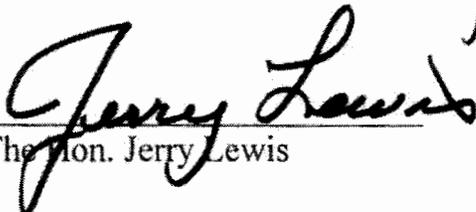

The Hon. Dave Camp

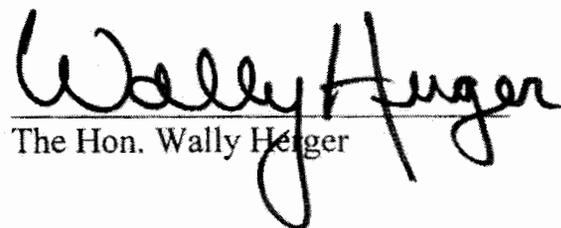

The Hon. Joe Courtney


The Hon. Joe Baca


The Hon. Patrick Kennedy


The Hon. Darrell E. Issa

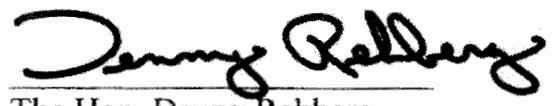

The Hon. Jerry Lewis

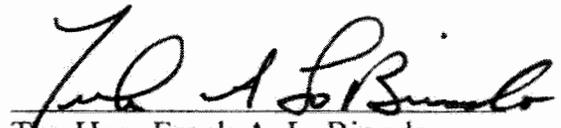

The Hon. Wally Herger

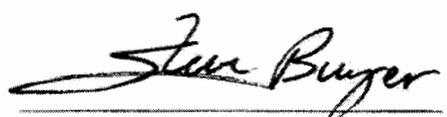
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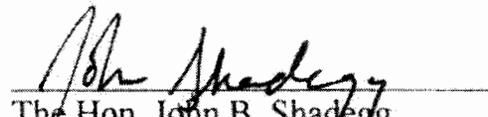

The Hon. Bob Goodlatte

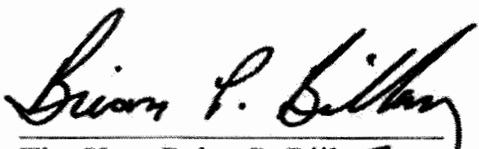

The Hon. Dean Heller


The Hon. Denny Rehberg


The Hon. Frank A. LoBiondo

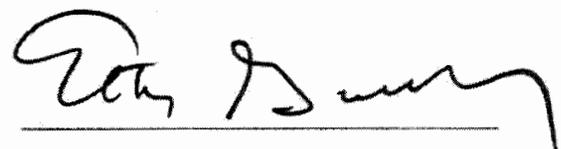

The Hon. Steve Buyer


The Hon. John B. Shadegg


The Hon. Brian P. Bilbray

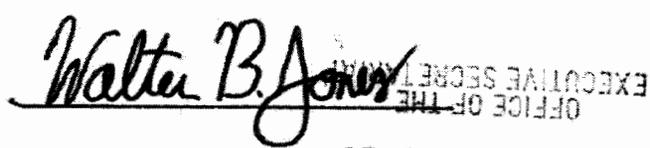

The Hon. Heath Shuler


The Hon. Gene Taylor









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LETTER TO THE HONORABLE KEN SALAZAR
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
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LIST OF SIGNATORIES

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The Hon. John Campbell
The Hon. Walter B. Jones

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The Hon. Frank A. LoBiondo
The Hon. John B. Shadegg
The Hon. Heath Shuler
The Hon. Elton Gallegly
The Hon. Ken Calvert



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240



DEC 14 2009

The Honorable Mark H. Schauer
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Schauer:

Thank you for your letter to Secretary Ken Salazar, dated November 3, 2009, in which you express opposition to taking off-reservation lands into trust for gaming purposes.

As you may know, the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act contains a general prohibition against gaming on lands acquired in trust after October 17, 1988, but provides several exceptions. The general exception is that gaming may be conducted on after-acquired land if the Secretary determines gaming on the land would be in the best interest of the tribe and its members, and not detrimental to the surrounding community, including nearby Indian tribes, and the governor of the state concurs in the determination. Please note this determination has been made by the Secretary only five times in the last 21 years.

The Department is undertaking a careful review of the Indian gaming policy and your comments will be carefully considered. Thank you for your interest in this matter and please continue to keep me informed of your views.

Sincerely,

Larry Echo Hawk
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

AUG 18 2009

The Honorable Mark Schauer
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Schauer:

Thank you for your August 3, 2009, letter to Secretary Salazar expressing your support for the Match-e-be-nash-she-wish (aka Gun Lake Tribe).

I am please to report that in accordance with 25 U.S.C. 467, on August 10, 2009, trust lands in Wayland Township, Allegan County, Michigan, were proclaimed to be part of the Match-e-be-nash-she-wish Indian Reservation. Public notice of this action has been published in the Federal Register on August 18, 2009.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (202) 208-7163.

Sincerely,

Larry Echo Hawk
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs