



CITY OF  
**PORTLAND, OREGON**

**Dan Saltzman, Commissioner**  
1221 SW Fourth Ave., Room 230  
Portland, Oregon 97204  
(503) 823-4151  
Fax: (503) 823-3036  
dsaltzman@ci.portland.or.us

US Senate Committee on Indian Affairs  
838 Hart Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

March 6, 2006

RE: February 28, 2006 Oversight Hearing on Indian Gaming Testimony

Dear Chair McCain and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. I am writing to express my concern over the proposed off-reservation casino in Cascade Locks, Oregon, within the heart of one of our nation's most scenic treasures, the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, and just forty miles from Portland.

I support reform of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) by requiring greater community consultation and approval and support restrictions on what is commonly referred to as "off-reservation gaming." In addition, I support amending the IGRA so that Indian gaming casinos are prohibited within our national parks and national scenic areas and would like to make sure there are no loopholes in the legislation that would exempt current off-reservation proposals from the amendments.

The proposed 600,000 square foot Cascade Locks casino would have a severe impact on Portland and our residents. Casino advocates estimate that 3 million people per year will visit the casino and that it would employ 1,740 people. The vast majority of these visitors would travel from the Portland metropolitan area. This would dramatically increase traffic and congestion on I-84, and would worsen already severe air pollution problems within the Columbia Gorge.

Although the residents of Portland are the primary target market of this casino proposal, because we lie outside a ten mile radius we have not seen a request for consultation from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of the Interior regarding this proposal.

The Warm Springs Tribe has the largest reservation in Oregon located along US Highway 26, is just ten miles from US Highway 97, and is in the heart of central Oregon, the fastest growing region in the State of Oregon. The Tribes' existing casino lies 11 miles off US Highway 26, in an isolated location and does not take advantage of the ever-increasing traffic along that corridor. I support the Warm Spring's efforts to create a reliable, sustainable revenue source for their tribal members, but I am disappointed that

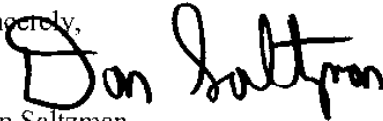
the Bureau of Indian Affairs has chosen not to require consideration of an on-reservation alternative as stated by the scoping requirements for the Environmental Impact Statement released March 2, 2006.

If the Warm Springs Tribe were to locate a new **on-reservation** casino along U.S. Highway 26, that casino would generate much more revenue than their current casino provides for this already successful Tribe, it would provide many more jobs for tribal members closer to their homes, it would maintain Oregon's policy barring off-reservation casinos and would protect the Columbia River Gorge, one of America's natural scenic treasures, from the ill-effects of a Las Vegas-sized casino.

I urge you to consider amending the IGRA to prohibit casinos within our national parks, wilderness areas, national scenic areas and national recreation areas which would eliminate the inherent conflicts between large-scale casino gaming and the preservation of natural, scenic and natural resource-based recreational values. I also urge that you do not exempt from your reforms Tribal petitions to take land into trust for purposes of gaming that the Secretary of the Interior was in the process of reviewing before November 18, 2005. Your legislation is designed to protect the people of the United States from the negative impacts of reservation shopping and the people of Portland deserve the same protections.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment on this matter and for your interest and attention to this issue.

Sincerely,



Dan Saltzman  
Portland City Commissioner