

# **Friends of Amador County**

*"The Voice of Thousands"*

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**March 18, 2009**

Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
U.S. Senator – California  
331 Hart Senate Building  
Washington D.C. 20-510

Via FAX 202-228-3954

Regarding: SB 338

Dear Senator Feinstein,

The Friends of Amador County supports your efforts to require the Lytton Band of Pomo Indians to follow the two-part determination process as outlined in your Senate Bill 338. We would urge you to go one step farther and extend that requirement to include all Indian Tribes. Doing so will return some measure of control back to the local communities.

In our dealings with various federal agencies regarding the proposed casino at Buena Vista, a rural area of Amador County California, we have found the entire Indian Gaming process to be corrupt. The federal agencies involved are frequently arrogant and dismissive of the needs of the local community. The response or rather lack of response to serious problems identified in the Buena Vista Rancheria FTEIR is a perfect example. While the Tribe agreed that there were twenty unsafe school bus stops twice a day in the vicinity of the proposed casino, their response was that motorist must obey the vehicle code therefore no mitigation is necessary. The FTEIR is filled with similar dismissive responses to very serious and clearly identified problems. The fact that a Tribe can ignore problems identified in an environmental document in such a manner amounts to fraud. The public assumes that they are protected by the requirement for an environmental review but nothing could be further from the truth.

Similarly, the frequent and blatant disregard for the laws and regulations by the BIA and NIGC as they relate to Indian Gaming and the alleged Buena Vista Tribe are just staggering and too numerous to mention here. We have written documentation that proves that if the laws are followed, would be no Buena Vista Tribe and the site of the proposed casino would not eligible for gaming. Several of our members will be in D.C. the week of March 22, 2009 and will provide your staff with our information.

The fact that groups such as the Friends of Amador County have to file suit to get governmental agencies to follow the law speaks volumes about the sad state of our tax supported governmental agencies.

Senator, we greatly appreciate your efforts to return control over Indian gaming back to the local community. We urge you to extend that requirement to all proposed Indian casinos, especially in California where the confusion surrounding Rancheria's leads to widespread corruption of federal agencies.

Sincerely,

Jerry Cassesi, Chairman  
Friends of Amador County