

Dehesa Valley Community Council, Inc.
P.O. Box 1631
El Cajon, CA 92022

The Honorable Patricia Wiggins, Chair
Senate Local Government Committee
State Capitol Room 4081
Sacramento, Ca 95814

**RE: OPPOSE – SB 170 (Florez) – Williamson Act Contracts: Cancellation
Set for Hearing April 15, 2009**

Dear Senator Wiggins:

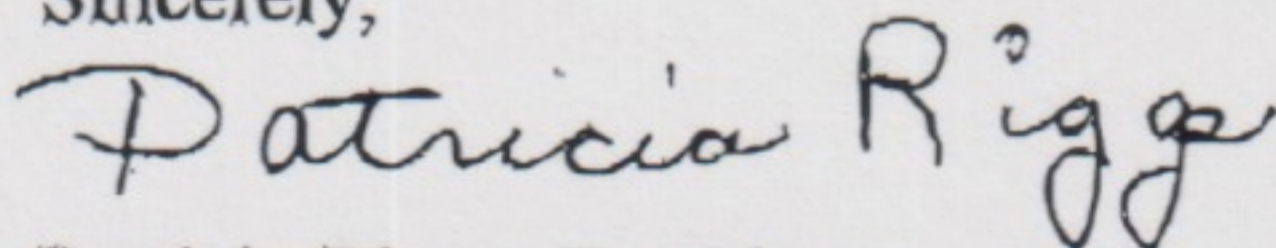
Cancellation of Williamson SB 170 (Florez) contracts by tribal interests is not in the best interest of the public. A Tribes participation in the exercise of public power such as the condemnation of the Williamson Act that is located off-reservation, significantly diminishes public accountability and control. Because of Indian tribal sovereignty, there is no recourse for neighbors, county, state or federal interests.

For example, over the last several years, tribal governments have applied through the federal regulatory process and Acts of Congress to acquire thousands upon thousands of acres of land into trust. One such action involved the Sycuan Band of Mission Indians which is located in the State of California, County of San Diego, and is approximately 82.85 acres. In their "Notice of Non-Gaming Land Acquisition Application" The Sycuan Band stated that "they anticipated the land will be used to facilitate space for future tribal housing, continue to be used for both cultural purposes and additional future housing needs" The Sycuan Band now operates a four story parking structure on this property with a walkway to the Casino. A parking structure to serve a casino is considered a "Gaming Facility" in Section 2.8 of the State-Sycuan Compact.

In a letter to BIA regarding the flexibility of tribes to change land purposes once in trust from Congress, Assistant Secretary Carl Artmen responded to Congressman Duncan Hunter: "**once land is taken into trust, the Department is not authorized to reconsider its decision because land cannot be taken out of trust without Congressional authorization. In addition, the Department has been reluctant in the past to take any action to eliminate the flexibility that Indian tribes enjoy to change the use of trust lands both because it is an aspect of tribal sovereignty and because it is a needed tool to adapt to change economic conditions.**

We respectfully request that you vote "NO" when SB 170 is heard before your committee.

Sincerely,



Patricia Riggs, President

Cc: Dave Cox, Sam Aanestad, Christine Kehoe, Lois Wolk, Supervisor Dianne Jacob