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 SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA TRADE &
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 SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER
 EDUCATION
 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
 VICE CHAIR
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 VETERANS AFFAIRS

California State Senate

SENATOR
JEFF DENHAM
 TWELFTH SENATE DISTRICT



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 CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY COUNCIL
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 COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS - WEST

E-MAIL ADDRESS
 SENATOR DENHAM@SEN.CA.GOV
 WEBSITE
 WWW.SEN.CA.GOV/DENHAM

February 15, 2005

Dear Citizens of San Benito County:

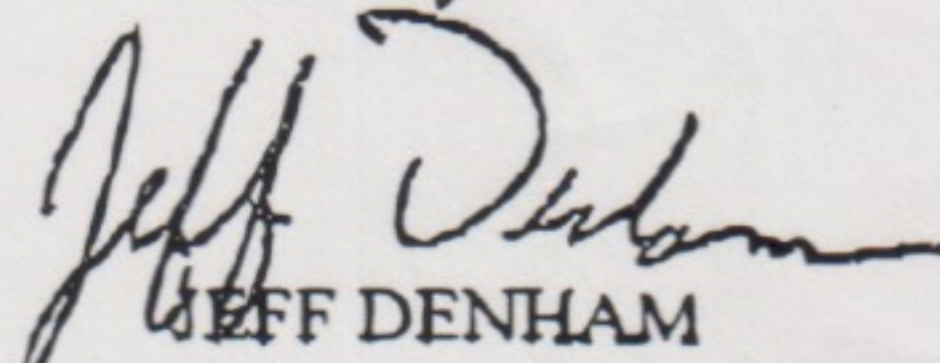
Like you, I have serious concerns about a Native American tribe suddenly announcing their intention to build a casino in an area in which the tribe has no indigenous history. I have met with many tribal leaders throughout the state, and they, too, have expressed this same concern.

Specifically, concerning the proposal by the California Valley Miwok Indians to build a casino in San Benito County, the only way I would ever support it is if the citizens and leaders of San Benito County reached a unified consensus supporting the proposal. If a tribe cannot gain support from locally-elected officials and the community-at-large, then any plans for a proposed casino should be withdrawn. A casino and its related impacts should never be forced onto a small rural county over the objections of its citizens and leaders. Any proposed casino in San Benito County has many obstacles to overcome. In order for a Native American Tribe to even consider acquiring land into trust for a casino the federal government requires that local concerns must be addressed. There would still be the required compact negotiations with the Governor as well as ratification by both houses of the State Legislature.

The voters passed both Proposition 1A in 1999 and Proposition 5 in 2000 and gave Native Americans the right to operate casinos on indigenous land. This did not give any tribe the right to go shopping throughout the state for new casino sites.

Given that this issue also involves the federal and local governments, you may wish to additionally convey your feelings on this matter to San Benito County Board of Supervisors as well as Congressman Sam Farr.

Sincerely,


 JEFF DENHAM
 12th Senate District

REPRESENTING MADERA, MERCED, MONTEREY, SAN BENITO AND STANISLAUS COUNTIES

STATE CAPITOL ROOM 4062
 SACRAMENTO CA 95814
 (916) 445-1392
 (916) 405-0779 FAX

1630 N. CARPENTER ROAD, #A-4
 MODESTO CA 95321
 (209) 577-6582
 (209) 577-4063 FAX

350 MAIN STREET #208
 SALINAS, CA 93901
 (831) 760-8040
 (831) 769-8086 FAX

2824 MARK AVENUE #C
 MERCED CA 95348
 (209) 720-3493
 (209) 726-5496 FAX