

MIKE THOMPSON

1ST DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEES:

AGRICULTURE

ARMED SERVICES



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
June 23, 2000

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Montie Deer, Chairman
National Indian Gaming Commission
1441 L Street, Suite 9100, NW
Washington, DC 20005-3512

Chairman Deer:

The Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria in Loleta, California has proposed construction of an Indian gaming facility. The adjacent neighbors have concerns about the impacts on the community and have contacted me with specific questions concerning the proposed project.

Specifically, could you please provide a legal determination as to whether or not the land is eligible to site a gaming facility, pursuant to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA).

As I understand it, the land on which the Rancheria proposes to build the casino was purchased by HUD to provide housing for the members of the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria. Apparently the land is not within the historic boundaries of the Rancheria. Further, at the time of the purchase, the local government and adjacent community were assured the purpose for the purchase was solely to provide needed housing. In 1997, when I served in the California State Senate, I wrote to the NIGC and asked a similar question. In response, I was informed the Solicitor's Office was in the process of making a legal determination. Three years have lapsed and the community is rightfully frustrated by the lack of a definitive response.

I would appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Thompson".

MIKE THOMPSON
Member of Congress
1st District, California

cc: Office of the Solicitor, Department of Interior
Carmen Fazio, Realty Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, California
Suzie Fregeau
Noel Krahforst
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