

February 20, 2009

Secretary Ken Salazar  
US Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, Room 4160  
Washington, DC 20240

RE: North Fork Rancheria's Casino Project; Application to Move to Highway 99

Dear Secretary Salazar,

I am writing to oppose the proposed North Fork Rancheria Casino application which would authorize a casino on land 40 miles from the tribe's existing reservation.

Even though we are not from the Central Valley, there's a lot a stake for our community if this application receives federal approval. It will set a strong precedent for off-reservation gambling throughout California. Right now there are 21 pending applications for other tribes to acquire new land for gaming and another 85 applications by tribes to acquire more than 8,000 acres of land adjacent or contiguous to existing reservations for expansion that might be used for gaming in the future.

If the Department of Interior approves the North Fork application to annex a 305-acre site just off one of the Central California's busiest highways, Highway 99, it will open the flood gates for other tribes to begin reservation shopping everywhere in California. This was not what voters intended when they authorized Indian gaming.

In 2000, California voters approved Proposition 1A to promote tribal self-reliance. Proposition 1A legalized Indian gaming on historical tribal lands that were situated away from urban areas. Since then, some tribes have been approached by professional casino operators who want to change the rules to build casinos in urban areas and along highway corridors to get the greatest financial return possible.

Furthermore, taking outside land purchased by these casino operators into trust for purposes of gaming appears to violate the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) which mandates that prior to engaging in gaming, the tribe must have governmental jurisdiction over the land.

Approving a move by the North Fork Rancheria to Highway 99, 40 miles away from their historic lands will have lasting consequences for all of our communities. I do not want a rush by gaming interests to relocate in my community. I urge you to reject this application and work with the tribe to find a more suitable location on their existing land.

Sincerely,  
Name  
Address

Cc: Senator Diane Feinstein  
Rep. George Radanovich

***(Addresses for the above: Senator Feinstein--United States Senate,331 Hart  
Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510, Rep. Radanovich--1040 E.  
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