

THE OREGON FAMILY COUNCIL

May 12, 2005

Gale Norton
Secretary of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

FAX 202-208-6956

Dear Secretary Norton:

We are writing to express our concerns about possible changes to federal policies that govern Native American casinos and to request that you oppose an off-reservation casino in Oregon at Cascade Locks. This proposal, advanced by Governor Ted Kulongoski, is not well considered and fails to consider the views and concerns of all Oregonians. Indeed, we suspect that this proposal doesn't even represent the views of a *majority* of Oregonians.

As people of faith, we are deeply concerned about the impact of expanded gambling on children and family's, particular those families of limited financial means who can least afford to put their paychecks at risk.

We respect the current laws that allow Native American Tribes in Oregon and elsewhere to have casinos on their reservation property. We oppose changes, however, that would permit casinos on off reservation property. Oregon families cannot risk the slippery slope of casinos moving off reservations and into our cities near neighborhoods, churches, schools and business districts.

Gambling affects us all and, in general, leads to greater poverty, addictions and social, moral and family decay. We recognize that we cannot stop what is already legal, but we strongly oppose changes to current government policies that would expand casino gambling in our state. No doubt, if a new casino is allowed in the City of Cascade Locks, which borders Multnomah County, our state's most populous county, then other Tribes and even private interests will demand that they too be allowed to build casinos in Multnomah County. In fact, this has already begun to occur, and a new policy hasn't even been announced yet.

As organizations and individuals who work with and represent people of faith – thousands of Oregon families – we urge you to look at the big picture in making this decision and not the narrow debate over one casino vs. another. We urge you to consider the long-term negative social impacts on people and communities if casinos are allowed to be located off Native American reservation lands.



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