



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
900 COURT ST NE
SALEM, OR 97301

May 8, 2013

The Honorable Kevin K. Washburn
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
MS-4141-MIB
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20240

Stanley Speaks, Regional Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Northwest Regional Office
911 Northeast 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97232-4169

Re: Preliminary Response of the Southern Oregon Legislative Delegation to Coquille Tribe's Proposed Trust Request for Gaming

Honorable Washburn and Director Speaks,

We, the members of the Southern Oregon Legislative Delegation, would like to go on the record as opposing the Coquille Indian Tribe's application to have 2.42 acres of land located in Medford, Oregon to be acquired in trust for the purpose of Class II gaming.

This proposal is also being opposed by the Jackson County Board of Commissioners and multiple other Indian tribes. Furthermore, officials from the City of Medford have stated publicly that they cannot support the proposal and therefore oppose it.

A number of concerns have been brought forth by the City of Medford with regards to this proposal. They include the loss of regulatory jurisdiction over city land, impacts on the city, the potential for future casino expansion and the economic impacts of problem gambling.

The City of Medford has been contacted by representatives from multiple tribes, who have also spoken out against this proposal in public hearings. Their objections include the fact that the Coquille Tribe lacks a significant historical connection to Medford and the city is not within the area that federal courts have identified as the tribe's territory.

Although the tribe's restoration act establishes Jackson County as part of its service area where members are allowed to receive federal benefits, those designations are based on where tribal members live today, not historical locations.

Members of the Shasta and Cow Creek band of the Umpqua Indian Tribe have presented evidence to the Medford City Council that the Coquille Tribe does not have aboriginal ties to the area. They also stated that their ancestors fought, died and were buried in Medford and Jackson County, and that permitting the Coquille Tribe to pursue this proposal would be an affront to their ancestors and to the tribal sovereignty and traditions that exist within and without federal government recognition. It is also feared that approval of this proposal would establish a precedent that would encourage other tribes to seek additional trust land for gaming.

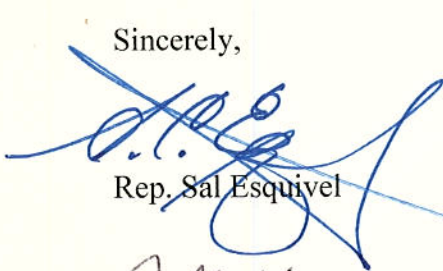
Some of the concerns raised by the City of Medford and its officials are very specific. They include the fact that the land in question does not quality for gaming. The proposed action would take the property out of local control to establish an activity that is not allowed under state or local law.

Another issue is that the federal government already owns 48 percent of the land in Jackson County, and because of that, we cannot support the further removal of lands from the state, city or the county.

Overall, we object to this proposal on the aforementioned grounds. We do not feel that this proposal fits the community. It is on a piece of land 170 miles from the tribe's designated territory, and it also violates an agreement that each tribe should have only one casino.

Because of all these reasons, we want to state our objections on the record, and hope that you consider them when deliberating on this matter.

Sincerely,



Rep. Sal Esquivel



Sen. Herman Baertschiger



Sen. Doug Whitsett



Sen. Jeff Kruse




Sen. Alan Bates



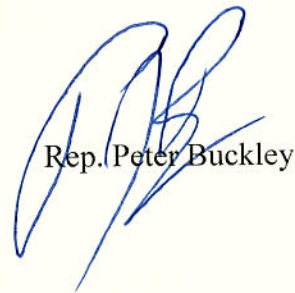
Rep. Mike McLane



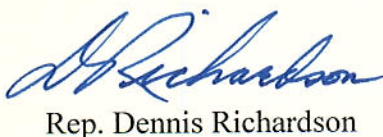
Rep. Wayne Krieger



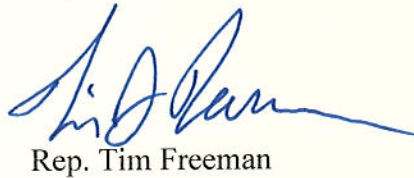
Rep. Bruce Hanna



Rep. Peter Buckley



Rep. Dennis Richardson



Rep. Tim Freeman