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The Tulalip Tribes are the successors in interest to the Snohomish, Snoqualmie, and Skykomish tribes and other tribes and band signatory to the Treaty of Point Elliott

**THE TULALIP TRIBES OFFICIAL TESTIMONY
GLEN GOBIN, VICE-CHAIRMAN
SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS
OVERSIGHT HEARING ON THE FUTURE OF INTERNET GAMING:
What's at Stake for Tribes?
Thursday, November 17, 2011**

Introduction

Good afternoon Chairman Akaka, Ranking Member Barrasso and Committee Members, my name is, TE CHUHT, Glen Gobin, I am the Vice-Chairman of the Tulalip Tribes. I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify today on behalf of my Tribal Nation. We would also like to thank you for having this hearing and recognizing the potential impacts of Internet gambling in Indian Country. Although I am here today to testify on behalf of the Tulalip Tribes, I believe that our views are not unique to Tulalip.

The Tulalip Tribes are the successors in interest to the Snohomish, Snoqualmie, and Skykomish Tribes and other Tribes and bands signatory to the Treaty of Point Elliot in 1855. On behalf of the Tulalip Tribes, we see **legalization of Internet gambling as a direct threat to the economic growth in Indian Country and we do not support any proposals that legalize Internet Gambling.**

Background: Positive Impacts of Indian Gaming

In 1988, Congress passed the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, known as IGRA. IGRA provides a statutory basis with the intent to promote tribal economic development, self-sufficiency, and strong tribal governments (25 U.S.C. 2701). IGRA has been, by far, the most significant piece of legislation since self-determination that has given Indian Tribes the economic opportunity to meet the needs of its membership without constraints that are often associated with outside financial funding.

Today, Indian gaming accounts for \$26.5 billion annually to this nation's economy. These dollars do not stay within the reservation boundaries. Historically, Indian Tribes have not always had the economic means to meet even the basic needs of its membership. Indian Gaming dollars today have gone to build infrastructure such as roads, bridges, underground utilities, provide fire protection, police protection, and medical services. These improvements and services are developed at a higher rate in Indian Country than any other jurisdiction in the nation.

The Tulalip Tribal Council created the Consolidated Borough of Quil Ceda Village in the year 2000, a tribal municipality, unique within the United States. Indian gaming revenues supported the infrastructure development

within the Village and allowed Tulalip to attract quality nationally known businesses to the reservation. The Village was created to enhance and diversify our tribal economy. Today, over \$30 million a year in Washington state sales tax is collected from Quil Ceda Village, with no state services being provided back to the Tribe. Although we may not agree with the state collection of these sale taxes, what everyone can agree on is the benefit that tax dollars bring to the Washington state economy. This type of diversification can be seen across Indian Country, and is a direct result of Indian gaming revenues.

Employment in Indian Country has also increased dramatically since the passage of IGRA. Tribal gaming enterprises are often the largest employers in their respective communities; such is the case for the Tulalip Tribes, which is the third largest employer in Snohomish County behind Boeing and the Everett Navy Base. Tulalip signed its first gaming compact in 1991. At that time Tulalip had roughly 350 employees. Today, we directly employ over 3500 people in government operations and tribal government enterprises, the majority of these employees are non-members with livable wages and full health benefits. Coupled with the other business development that is located within the Village, over 6000 jobs have been created. This is a direct result of Indian gaming.

While Tulalip recognizes that not all Tribes have grown in the same manner, the positive changes and successes seen in Indian Country as a result of Indian gaming cannot be understated. IGRA has been able to provide for development where no development was possible, to give opportunities where there were none before, and has allowed for true tribal self-determination.

Views Opposing Federal Legalization of Internet Gambling

There is a lot at stake for Tribes and the local economies where Indian gaming enterprises are located and have been able to thrive and we strongly oppose any proposals to legalize Internet gambling that threaten these economies.

Of the \$60 billion gaming dollars that are generated within the US economy from both Commercial and Indian gaming, Indian gaming dollars make up over 40%. The proponents who seek to legalize Internet gambling say that it will create \$41 billion over the next 10 years, however, let us not forget that Indian gaming will provide \$265 billion within this same time frame.

The proposals to legalize Internet gambling also ignore long established policies and principles regarding tribal sovereignty. The proposed legislation dismisses the regulatory system established under IGRA that not only protects the customer, but the integrity of the games, and ignores the widely held rule that governments do not tax another government. Moreover, tribal Gaming dollars are already taxed at 100% by their own governments in meeting the intent of IGRA, strengthening Tribal governments.

Conclusion

Proposals to legalize Internet gambling comes at too great of a risk to the economic growth that has occurred in tribal economies and the surrounding communities.

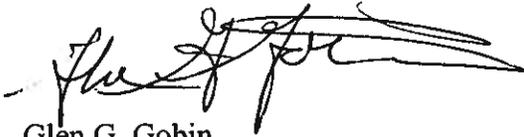
If proposals to legalize Internet gambling do move forward, we urge a full and open legislative process allowing all Indian Tribes to voice their concerns and provide input.

Furthermore, the Tulalip Tribes fully supports the six principles regarding legalization of Internet gambling put forward by the National Indian Gaming Association and the National Congress of American Indians, wherein, any and all proposed Federal legislation must respect Tribal sovereignty by ensuring an Indian Tribes right to operate,

regulate, tax, and license Internet gaming and these rights must not be subordinate to any non-federal authority; legislation must not open up IGRA for amendments; legislation must respect existing Tribal-State Compacts; legislation must ensure positive economic benefits to Indian Country; legislation must ensure that Internet gambling authorized by Indian Tribes is available to customers in any locale where Internet gambling is not criminally prohibited; and legislation must be consistent with long-held federal law and policy, tribal revenues must not be taxed.

Again, on behalf of the Tulalip Tribes, I thank the committee for the opportunity to hear some of the concerns from the Tulalip Tribes and Indian Country on legalization of Internet gambling.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen G. Gobin', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Glen G. Gobin
Vice-Chairman, Tulalip Tribes