

To: Matthew Dermody[matthew_dermody@ios.doi.gov]
From: "Rees, Gareth" <gareth_rees@ios.doi.gov>
Sent: 2018-03-09T15:19:26-05:00
Importance: Normal
Subject: Fwd: Meeting Request
Received: 2018-03-09T16:19:26-05:00

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Ado Machida** <ado.machida@navigatorsglobal.com>
Date: Thu, Feb 1, 2018 at 3:34 PM
Subject: Meeting Request
To: "david_bernhardt@ios.doi.gov" <david_bernhardt@ios.doi.gov>, "gareth_rees@ios.doi.gov" <gareth_rees@ios.doi.gov>
Cc: Jim Pitts <jim.pitts@navigatorsglobal.com>

Dave,

Hope all is well!

I am writing you today on behalf of The Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians, with a request to visit with you at your earliest convenience.

As you may be aware, Chukchansi was done a great disservice during the waning days of the Obama Administration, when the Interior Department approved North Fork Band of Mono Indians' request for an "off-reservation" gaming application. They did so by not going through the proper procedures, as well as in full disregard of the will of the people of California.

I would like to bring in the Chairwoman of the Tribe, along with a couple of other tribal members, to voice their frustration as to you why this decision will have a devastating impact on the Tribe, and the surrounding communities. While there are myriad reasons why this off reservation decision by the Obama Administration was inappropriate, let me just list 2 for you today.

- Federalism. The Obama Department of Interior-approved North Fork

Band's application for "off-reservation" gaming goes against the will of the State of California and the majority of its citizens (in a statewide referendum, over 61% of the voters disapproved of the North Fork Band's "off-reservation" gaming compact).

- Improper procedure. As you are aware, in the rare instance where an off-reservation application can be considered, it cannot cause significant economic harm to other Tribes. The Chukchansi Tribe provided substantial evidence of severe economic distress should this application be granted, including: the possibility of closing of its existing on-reservation Tribal casino; laying off numerous Native and non-native employees; defaulting on a variety of loans; and a rapid scaling back of Tribal benefits to its members. It also pointed out that economic harm would also ensue to other on-reservation casinos in the area. Nevertheless, the prior leadership of the Department ignored these facts and approved the project.

In previous meetings with officials in the Department, the phrase, "this would never happen again," has been bandied about. While pleasing to hear going forward, this does nothing to correct the wrong that has already been done.

While we would normally take this up with Deputy Assistant Secretary Tahsuda, he has recused himself from this issue, hence our immediate request to meet with you. Our meeting would be brief, as we think the record speaks for itself, and we would ask you and the Secretary to use your legal authority to overturn this incorrect decision.

Off-reservation gaming must be narrowly focused without undue harm to surrounding Tribes or the floodgates will be open to these types of applications nationwide. Unfortunately, the Obama Administration's inappropriate decision on behalf of North Fork provides a road map for future Tribes trying to game the system, thereby putting other Tribes' economic viability at risk.

Finally, this would be the first federally approved “off-reservation” casino, which could literally result in the closing of a nearby “on-reservation” gaming facility. This is not consistent with current federal Indian policy under this new Administration.

Dave, despite your hectic schedule, I hope you will have the time for us to visit with us so that we may be able to right this wrong.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Many thanks and best regards.

Ado



Ado Machida | Navigators Global LLC

[901 7th Street N.W., Suite 200, Washington, DC 20001](#)

P 202.315.5100 | F 202.315.5010

ado.machida@navigatorsglobal.com

--

Gareth C. Rees

Office to the Deputy Secretary

U.S. Department of the Interior

Tel: 202-208-6291

Fax: 202-208-1873

Cell: 202-957-8299