

November 12, 2015

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Office of the Speaker of the House  
H-232, US Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Office of the Democratic Leader  
H-204, US Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Leader Pelosi,

As the elected leaders of towns and cities in the State of Arizona, we are writing to you to convey our support for H.R. 308, the Keep the Promise Act of 2015, and urge you to pass this bill as soon as possible.

In 2002, the people of Arizona voted to approve a tribal-state compact, which, among other things, prohibited additional casinos from being built in the Phoenix area through 2027. In exchange for this prohibition, tribes were granted the exclusive authority to conduct gaming within the state. H.R.308 simply preserves and codifies the will of the Arizona people.

For us, this issue is about more than public policy. It is about preserving the integrity of our communities by keeping casinos from opening across the street from our schools, churches, and homes. It's also about maintaining the trust and integrity that was forged over a decade ago between tribes and our governments.

In 2002, a representative for a coalition of 17 Arizona tribes testified to the State Senate that the tribal-state gaming compact would not permit the construction of additional casinos in the Phoenix area beyond the number that existed at the time.

This promise – that there would be “no additional casinos in the Phoenix metropolitan area” -- had the full and complete backing of the Tohono O’odham Nation and other tribes and was widely publicized to Arizona voters who were asked to approve the compact in a state-wide referendum. Now, the Tohono O’odham Nation is building a new casino near Phoenix, in direct opposition to the promises it made, and which voters relied on when they went to the polls.

The Tohono O’odham Nation has purchased land across the street from a high school and is building a Las Vegas style casino 100 miles from its primary reservation. This is not what the Arizona voters and other tribes intended when they approved the State-tribal gaming compacts. And, more importantly, it is contrary to the statements that Tohono O’odham made to persuade the voters of Arizona to support tribal exclusivity for gaming in Arizona.

That's why this legislation has the support of the Governor, the State Legislature, numerous tribal governments, and almost the entire Arizona congressional delegation. Congress is the only entity that can address this issue. We ask that you move quickly to enact this legislation.

Sincerely,



Linda Kavanagh,  
Mayor  
Fountain Hills, Arizona



John W. Lewis  
Mayor  
Town of Gilbert



Gail Barney  
Mayor  
Town of Queen Creek



John S. Insalaco  
Mayor  
City of Apache Junction



Tom Schoaf  
Mayor  
City of Litchfield Park



Mark W. Mitchell  
Mayor  
City of Tempe



John Giles  
Mayor  
Town of Mesa



W.J. "Jim" Lane  
Mayor  
City of Scottsdale



Jay Tibshraeny  
Mayor  
City of Chandler