



MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATIONAL COUNCIL

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Speaker: George Tiger

Second Speaker: Roger Barnett

September 15, 2006

Honorable Phil Hogen
National Indian Gaming Commission
1441 L. St. N.W.
9th Floor, Suite 9100
Washington, D.C. 2005

Honorable Chair Hogen:

Thank you Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to again express the concerns of the governing body of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council. The proposed regulations to Reclassify Electronic Aids for Class II Games and establish new Technical Standards for such aids will deprive tribes the full use and benefit of advances in technology, now and in the future.

I am George Tiger, Speaker of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council. I wish to request again that the National Indian Gaming Commission consider these comments as a matter of record.

In 1984 the Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council enacted NCA 84-04, (The Nation's first Gaming Law). This law established an independent regulatory body, the Office of Public Gaming. This office was tasked to oversee and regulate the nation's gaming activities. In the years prior to the passage of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act in 1988, and the formation of the National Indian Gaming Commission, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Office of Public Gaming was the sole regulatory agency for all gaming within the nation's jurisdictional boundary. NCA 84-04 and Office of Public Gaming Regulations were strictly enforced to protect the integrity of the nation and to protect the nation and gaming public from organized crime and corrupting influences. Not one instance was discovered that would indicate that there were improprieties at any venue operated by the nation.

Our nation was among the first to submit a gaming ordinance to the National Indian Gaming Commission for approval. This ordinance, with minor modifications, appears to have served as a model guide for the gaming ordinances approved by the commission for other Indian Nations.

The Class II regulations proposed by the Commission would change the history and stifle the evolution of bingo and games similar to bingo.

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The social aspects of bingo has evolved, from the slow pace social activity of community or family gatherings, to a dynamic social, entertaining and economic pastime enjoyed by a mobile and demanding society. The demands of the gaming public required constant innovation. Features were added to increase excitement as well as the speed and structure of the game to insure satisfaction of the player and profitability for the tribe.

These demands fostered further evolution in the manner that a game was presented for play. Speed plus more entertaining features were constant additions. The introduction of electronics was natural and dynamic features in the evolution of bingo. Electronic aids allowed more games in a shorter period thereby increasing profit potential.

The proposed regulations changing the Class II definitions and game classification standards ignore the historical changes to the common game of bingo.

I quote from the National Indian Gaming Commission web site:

“The Commission’s primary mission is to regulate gaming activities on Indian lands for the purpose of shielding Indian tribes from organized crime and other corrupting influences; to insure that Indian tribes are the primary beneficiaries of gaming revenue; and to assure that gaming is conducted fairly and honestly by both operators and player.”

The Commission has moved from their “Mission” into redefining the game of bingo. Specifically, the card size, speed of play and how fast and how much a player can lose or win does not alter the fact that bingo is bingo. The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act and numerous court decisions uphold the use of electronic aids in the game of bingo. Our nation’s gaming commission is well equipped, staffed and professionally responsible for regulating gaming activities within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

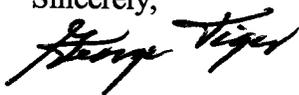
The proposed regulations undermine the authority of the “front line” tribal gaming commissions as well as infringe on the sovereignty of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

It is true that electronics has made the nation’s gaming commissions regulatory mission more complex and as we have progressed we have become more sophisticated in our approach to evaluating and regulating the electronic versions of bingo.

Redefining bingo and making unwarranted changes in the application of technology restricts Class II aids available to tribes and will have a long term detrimental economic effect on all Indian tribes and nations.

I again urge the National Indian Gaming Commission to reconsider the publication of the proposed regulations.

Sincerely,



George Tiger, Speaker
Muscogee (Creek) National Council

Cc: National Council Members