



Biography

CHAIRMAN

E. SEQUOYAH SIMERMEYER



E. Sequoyah Simermeyer (Coharie) is the Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Commission. He was appointed by the President to a three-year term after the United States Senate unanimously confirmed his nomination in November 2019. As Chairman, he is responsible for the federal regulatory agency's daily operations including its eight regional offices as well as its national and local training and technical assistance efforts. He has the authority to issue civil enforcement fines and temporary closure orders for regulatory violations by gaming operations on Indian lands. As a member of the National Indian Gaming Commission's three-member commission, he is responsible for regulating and ensuring the integrity of the more than 527 Indian gaming facilities, associated with nearly 247 tribes across 29 states.

Simermeyer first joined the Commission in November 2015 when he was appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to serve as an Associate Commissioner. As an Associate Commissioner, he directed the Agency's Office of Self-Regulation during which time the Commission unanimously certified a third of all self-regulated tribes. The responsibilities of the Commission's two Associate

Commissioners and its Chairman include hearing appeals, promulgating regulations, and approving an agency budget.

As Chairman, Simermeyer promotes four emphasis areas in the agency's work.

Industry Integrity – protecting the valuable tool of Indian gaming that in many communities creates jobs, is the lifeblood for tribal programs, and creates opportunities for tribes to explore and strengthen relationships with neighboring jurisdictions.

Agency Accountability – meeting the public's expectation for administrative processes that uphold good governance practices and support efficient and effective decision making to protect tribal assets.

Preparedness – promoting tribes' capacity to plan for risks to tribal gaming assets including natural disaster threats, the need to modernize and enhance regulatory and gaming operation work forces, or public health and safety emergencies.

Outreach – cultivating opportunities for outreach to ensure well-informed Indian gaming policy development through diverse relationships, accessible resources, and government-to-government consultation.

Prior to joining the NIGC, Simermeyer advised the Chairman to the United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. In that capacity he helped draft legislative proposals and committee reports, prepared oversight and legislative hearings, and advanced the Committee's work on priority issues facing Indian country. Simermeyer also served as Deputy Chief of Staff and as counselor to the Department of the Interior's Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs under multiple administrations. Before beginning federal public service in 2007, Simermeyer worked for the National Congress of American Indians, a national intertribal organization focusing on the protection of tribal governments' rights and status.

His work included policy development in the areas of gaming, taxation, and economic development. He also advanced the organization's state-tribal relations project and its activity before the United Nations and the Organization of American States on issues impacting Indigenous Peoples' rights.

Simermeyer graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Dartmouth College, N.H., a Masters of Study in Environmental Law from Vermont Law School, V.T., and received his Juris Doctor from Cornell Law School, N.Y.

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act created the National Indian Gaming Commission to support tribal self-sufficiency and the integrity of Indian gaming. NIGC oversees the efficient regulation of 527 gaming establishments operated by 247 tribes across 29 states.

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