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1	NATIONAL INDIAN GAMING COMMISSION
2	REGIONAL TRIBAL CONSULTATION
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9	Reporter's Transcript of Proceedings held
10	at the Seminole Hard Rock, 1 Seminole Way,
11	Hollywood, Florida, Commencing at 9:21 a.m., on
12	Tuesday, February 3, 2011 Before Randi J.
13	Garcia, RPR.
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CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Good morning.

To begin, I would like to turn the meeting over to Chairman Mitchell Cypress of the Seminole Tribe for opening and invocation.

CHAIRMAN MITCHELL CYPRESS: Thank you.

Good morning, everybody. I welcome everyone here, all the tribal leaders and their staff. And I know that everyone is happy to be here because we see on the news it's white everywhere. You pass, I guess, Central Florida and it gets cooler, but the weather changes from there on out. I understand there is some other places where the roof caved in like the Tulsa Hard Rock. It slows you down on your game. And we will probably need a lot of prayer for that, for them to arrive through the snow area.

But down here snow never hit the ground and the frost is the one that killed us out here.

I want to go ahead and start introducing the staff here. First of all, I would like to go ahead and introduce Mr. Jim Shore, his assistant Agnes, members of staff, Marty, Alan Huff, Senior. And we have Ross, the staff

attorneys and Joe Webster, Ed Jenkins and Mike Tiger, our treasurer. I just see a McDonald's sign there. Also, over here we have Suresh from accounting, and Jim Raker, and one of our accountants, Marsha Green.

I think we have a very fine staff that has been pushing us all the way up today and make sure we have some others that we will be discussing that we need to share, the information you all share with us.

I am going to introduce one of our tribal member counsel, Mr. Max Osceola.

MAX OSCEOLA: I will stand so you can see me. Welcome to paradise. Like they say on American Idol, "Welcome to Hollywood."

I want to give you a little history with a perspective of where you're at. In December of 1977 we started bingo, high-stakes bingo right across the street. You call it the classic. That is when Indian gaming started here.

The sheriff of Broward County was going to come on the reservation and force state regulation and we said "no, you are not." We got an injunction. We wanted the lower levels. Supreme Court said they're not going to hear

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it. That's right. If it's legal in the State of Florida, it is legal on the Indian reservation and it's a sovereign nation, we can regulate that activity. It was called Butterworth versus Seminole Tribe, who was the sheriff of Broward County. They said "what is butter worth? "About nickel a pound."

So we have progressed from '77 to where, I guess, we were under BIA. They didn't know want to do with gaming. They said how do we regulate this, states and congress, when they said how do we get our cut? When the natives were making the money selling trinkets, they didn't care. When we got into big business, then they wanted their cut. So they passed the National Gaming Act.

One time we were in Washington D.C. and I was talking to our senator, Senator Graham. I said "Senator Graham, there is a National Indian Gaming Act." I said "is there a national non-Indian Gaming Act?" He kind of --well, states regulate that activity. I said "BC, before Columbus, native tribes were here. We can regulate our own activity."

So I am happy to welcome you here. I am

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glad to see the staff from DC. I am glad to see you're a native too. Because in your heart you know where you're at. You may be working for the government, but you were born native. Welcome to Seminole Country.

Thank you.

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CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you,
Chairman Cypress. My name is Tracy Stevens. I
am a member of Tulalip Tribes from Washington
State. I am the chairwoman of the National
Gaming Commission. I want to extend my thanks
and gratitude to the Seminole Tribe for
allowing us to come into your territory and be
such gracious hosts. This is a wonderful
facility here. It's a great example of what
tribes can do when they govern themselves. And
it is a beautiful facility. We are really glad
that we are here today.

I do want to recognize we have former commissioners that are here, Joel Frank, the former national gaming commissioner, and also Teri Poust. I think Liz is here. Liz is in the other room. And also I want to recognize our staff that is here. We have outside Rita Homa. She is the executive secretary of the

commission, and works really, really hard. Ιf she doesn't speak a lot today, she has laryngitis. We appreciate all the work she has done to help us get here. We also have Mavis Harris here. She is right back here. handing out packets earlier. She's from our DC office. We have Cindy Altimus. She is over here with the transcriptionist. She's the regional director of the Eastern Region, Keith Hicks works in enforcement. Many of you may know him. Also, we have Larry Roberts, who is our new general counsel right over here, Paxton Myers, who is our chief of staff, and next to me is Lael Echo-Hawk, and last but not least Associate Commissioner Dan Little.

I want to say thanks to all the staff. We could not have -- this is our eighth stop. We could not have done this without the support of our staff. And where I come from you support the people that help you do your work. So I want to extend thanks to them.

I appreciate everyone coming out. This is the last stop on our eighth-stop tour on our Notice of Inquiry and regulatory review discussions. And I realize that many of you

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had to arrange your -- rearrange your travel so you could miss that storm or had to wait out the storm. There are many people who were not able to make it today because of the weather. So we appreciate everyone who is here today. Like I said, this is the last stop on this particular consultation tour.

There will be more. That is something that they have been trying to make sure we say. This is just the beginning. This is not a one-shot deal. We will be having more of these discussions as we -- while we are in office.

Many of you may have heard me in separate discussions or in conferences over the past six months since I have been in office. I have been in office since the beginning of July. This commission has come together to identify areas we believe need attention. They have come -- we have come down to basically four major initiatives.

The first one is consultation relationship building. Today is a demonstration of the changes that we have made to how we consult with tribes. This is a new day for the NIGC.

We will be having these -- when we are talking

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about broad policy, like regulations that affect tribes all across the country, we will having this open forum dialogue, you know. This is being recorded, so there is a record for those tribes who could not make it and can see what -- they can read for themselves what was discussed. We can have an open dialogue. We can exchange ideas. We can hear your thoughts and your suggestions, and especially for this subject today, your priorities, which regulations we should take a look at first.

Now, we certainly don't -- we know this is a change from the way meetings have been done before there -- the practice before was you would get a letter, sign up for a time, and you get 15 to 45 minutes, sort of an assembly line fashion to talk about a universe of things, policy, your individual issues. We still have individual meetings with tribes while we are travelling. If you ever come to DC or we are out in your area, if we are at a conference we our avail ourselves to make sure that we are available to the tribes to address those individual concerns. We don't expect your individual issues to be aired here today. We

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have side meetings, meetings outside of this consultation, to discuss those matters. But I want to let everyone know if you have individual issues, don't feel like that this is your only chance to talk to us about that.

Today's discussion is about the Notice of Inquiry. We will talk more about that in a moment. But this is the beginning of us working together, identifying the areas that we need to pay attention to, identifying issues, and also solving the issues, solving any problems we have. What we are learning over these eight consultations is that there are differences between tribes. There are different priorities, which is expected because tribes are just different. They are different culturally, different traditionally. Their gaming is different. Their demographics are different. Their operations are different. And what we are hearing is that tribes like to be able to sit in this format and say "I didn't know that that was an issue for tribe X, or I have a similar issue at my tribe."

Moreover, we have the opportunity to solve it together. We can do this together. And

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this is the beginning of building an agenda and then going to work together. So that is our first initiative.

Our second initiative is technical assistance and training. It is required by the statute, but we think it should be more than just a statutory requirement that we have to meet. We should be helping tribes protect their operations. You know, we should be a partner with you. And if we are providing training that doesn't help your situation, then we are not doing our jobs.

We are in a process of relying on our program, our technical assistant and training, so that we hit our target, we hit the target that you tell us needs to be hit for your facility or for your operations.

We recently put out a survey to tribes on internets, on web sites, by mail, fax, snail mail, e-mail. We have a number of responses. The survey was basically asking what kind of training do you need? Is there training that we are not offering? Do we need different levels of training?

So it's a very simple survey that we have

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gotten quite a bit of response back. And what we are going to do with that is take a look at our training catalog and make sure that we are providing the training that tribes need.

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I think that survey closed yesterday, but
I am sure we are getting more and more. We
will consider them as they trickle in, so that
we can really examine this program and make
sure that it is a streamline process, and it is
doing what it is intended to do, bring out and
prevent problems, help tribes stay in
compliance and safeguard the operations that
you all regulate on a day-to-day basis.

The third thing that we are doing is agency operation review. This is actually taking a lot more of our time than I had anticipated. And what that means basically is we should be just as concerned about how we run our operations. Our agency is we are about how you run your operations. What is good for the goose is good for the gander. We are spending a lot of time, that is, you know -- along with what Paxton is doing. He's chief of staff. And this is something that Associate

Commissioner Dan Little is taking up as one of

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his initiatives, to make sure that we are accounting, that we are transparent, and that our operations are efficient, they're running in the best way possible, so that we are providing the services that tribes need.

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So that is actually turning out to be quite a monumental task. I thought the reg review was going to be a big task. It turns out that agency operation review is the one that is really taking a lot of our time and our attention. And it should, you know.

How we run internally will reflect on what we provide to you externally. And, you know, we are committed to making sure that we are running a streamline agency.

Lastly, regulatory review, which is the topic of today's consultation. Many of you know we released a Notice of Inquiry which Lael will talk about briefly after we are done speaking, to ask tribes what regulations, which regulations and how should we go about addressing regulatory review.

Every administration comes in and they have a prerogative to say, "okay, where are we at?" Look to the past and say, okay, which

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regulations were put in place, and are they relevant still? That is what we are doing.

Because we are in such a short time frame -- I have been in office for six months. It is a three-year term. I have two and a half years left. And as the staff is learning, I am pushing everyone to go, go, go, go. Because I have minutes. I don't have two and a half years. I have minutes to try to do as much as I can to provide a better agency to all of the tribes. That means in terms of regulations.

We are asking -- we are involving tribes so that we work on the things that need to be worked on, and we don't get caught up in things that may not be necessarily a priority or that we work on multiple things and not have one issue, one regulation stop us from addressing others that need attention as well.

So Lael will talk more about that in a minute. I will say some of this is going to be a challenge. There will be points in time where we are not going to agree. But we will be very clear about why we disagree or why we made the decision. And we will share that with everyone.

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I do want to turn it over at this point.

Those are our four major priorities. Today we are kind of hitting on two. This is a new consultation format. At the beginning we are at the cusp of regulatory review. This is just an agenda building activity for tribes to have the opportunity to weigh in and say, okay, this is what needs to be addressed first. This is how we think it should go.

So four things we are working on:

Consultation, technical assistance, agency operations review and regulatory review. You will keep hearing me talk about that, because that is how I am going to keep you informed on what we say that we are going to do. You will keep hearing us talk about those four things, so you always know where we are at, and we are keeping up with what we said we would do.

So at this time I want to hand it over to Associate Commissioner Dan Little for some comments, and then we will turn it over to Lael. Most of today will be opening notes, the microphone and the record for your concerns. But I do want to give Associate Commissioner Little some time to chat.

COMMISSIONER DANIEL LITTLE: Good morning.

Thank you. I want to welcome all the tribal leaders and all the tribal elders and thank the Seminole Tribe and Chairman Cypress for the very warm hospitality. We left Rapid City yesterday morning and it was 18 below. So I am

happy to be here.

Just a couple of quick things. Like the chairwoman said, this session is for us to hear from the tribes, the issues that you're having. It's very important that we, as a commissioner here, you know, gets the feedback before we make decisions. And as Lael goes though the NOI there is a number of specific issues and questions. Please just keep in mind these are only suggestions. These are not any positions that the commission has taken. It is about the process where these point of discussions were brought up was through discussions with tribal leaders, with tribal commissioners, with our staff over the years folks have come up with these group of issues that could need reviewing. That is how they are. They are just suggestions. We are just really looking forward to hearing what you think about them.

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Once again, welcome, and I look forward to hearing from you all. Thank you.

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CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thanks. It does seem like we are doing a lot of the talking upfront, but, really, what we want to do is let you know what we are up to and briefly review the Notice of Inquiry that was published in the federal register in November.

Lael Echo-Hawk is heading up this particular initiative. She sat on the other side of the table, as all of us did. We come from the tribal side, and she has a lot of experience with codes and regulations, and she has been tasked with this particular monumental task. She is doing a good job managing process. If we don't get the process right, then we lose the substance.

So I will turn it ever to Lael to briefly do PowerPoint, go over what the Notice of Inquiry says. Then we will open the floor.

Many tribal leaders come to these and they have prepared statements. First of all, you all have busy schedules, much busier than ours will ever be. We recognize your time is limited.

We know that many of you come with prepared

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statements. We don't want to get stuck on one particular area. So we are just going to open the floor after we review the Notice of Inquiry.

Again, thank you. And I really look forward to working with the tribes together over the next two years. So I will turn it over to Lael.

LAEL ECHO-HAWK: Good morning. My name is Lael Echo-Hawk. I am a member of the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma. Counsel and Chairwoman Stevens, and I also would like to thank the Seminole Nation for allowing us to be here today. Like chairwoman said, it's much warmer. It's like 120-degree difference with a negative 40 below, with the wind chill when we were in Rapid City. This is much, much nicer.

I will briefly go over what the Notice of Inquiry is about, what the regulatory review process is going to be for the NIGC, obviously my contact information on the PowerPoint screen. You should all have a copy of the PowerPoint in your packet. If you didn't receive a packet, please raise your hand and we will have Mavis get some out to everyone so you

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can follow along. There are a couple of -- I see two over here. This can help you kind of follow along.

That is my contact information. Any issues or concerns you have regarding the regulatory review process on the agenda you can reach me at this phone number, this e-mail address, talk to me today. But we do want to hear from you. That is really what the intent of this Notice of Inquiry and this whole process is about.

So why regulatory review? As you guys all know, probably better than I do, the Indian Regulatory Act tasked the National Gaming Commission with putting together regulations to implement that. And so, you know, we do have a regulatory framework, but it is something that when this commission came on they agreed that it was something that we needed to review, take a look at, see how we can improve the industry.

Additionally, as most of you all likely know, President Obama issued a directive within the past two weeks telling agencies to take another look at their regulatory structure, to streamline it, streamline it, make it more

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efficient, update regulations. And so we kind of got up -- we are patting ourselves on the back, this is our idea. But, you know, that is what we are doing.

Additionally, we are required by the executive order and the Regulatory Flexibility Act to put together a semiannual regulatory review agenda. So that is something that will come out in April, and this whole process will lead to that agenda.

The Commission has also taken the executive order. We are all very familiar with it 13175, the consultation and coordination with Indian Tribal Government executive order. We take that very seriously. We are committed to the intent of that order. It is now on our web site. There is actually a button -- this is due in large part to Mavis right here, part of our web site staff, Mavis and Mark. We have a great staff who has been really great about updating our web site. We do have a new web page that is dedicated to tribal consultation. The executive order is on that web site. You click it, there is another button that will lead you to the regulatory review web page as

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well where all this information can be found.

But this commission is committed to the intent of that executive order. A particular section of the commission that it's really paying close attention to is section 3C3. It says "when undertaking to formulate and implement policies that have tribal implications, agency shall -- shall in determining whether to establish federal standards consult with tribal officials as to the need to those standards."

That is what we are doing today. That is what we have been doing for the past month.

Before we start working on standards, we want to talk to you, we want to understand what the needs truly are and how we can best go about making those changes that need to happen in regulations.

So what is a Notice of Inquiry? A Notice of Inquiry is something I haven't seen used with agencies when interacting with tribal governments. However, it is a tool that is used by a number of federal agencies when communicating with their constituents. So a Notice of Inquiry is questions. We hear that

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there is an issue regarding certain policies. Please tell us, you know, you people that are going to be the most affected by the changes or this policy, tell us what the issues are and how we can best work to address those issues. That is what this Notice of Inquiry is.

I will ask three primary questions. What regulations do we need to be looking at? When, sort of and what priority level. As the chairwoman mentioned, we are operating on a very short time frame. By best guess for how long we can continue ruling before the presidential election process really gets going, and they tell federal agencies to stop issuing rules is probably about 18 months.

So 18 months to consult, to do revisions, to put the notice in the federal register is really not a long time. We have pretty -- it looks like we are going to have a lot on our plate. We will really need your assistance. We need to know the priorities. What are the most important things that need to be addressed? Then, finally, how? The how leads to tribal advisory committees, do we do this through negotiated rule making. Are there some

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instances where a notice of written -- written notice of proposal we are making and then just asking for written comments, if that is sufficient. We need to know. We really need input from tribal leaders and your staff on how we should go about doing this. In the best way, that brings in the best comments from the industry, from the Indian Country, from the gaming operations, the tribal leadership.

So this is our road show. I keep hearing that we are going to get T-shirts made, but I haven't seen them yet. But this is where we have been. Since January 11 we have been in eight locations holding eight consultations. This is our last stop, obviously, but the idea was that we bring the agency to you that tribes should not have to travel to DC to talk to us. We need to be in Indian Country. So you guys can continue doing what is very important in your communities and you don't have to go all the way to DC.

So the Notice of Inquiry published

November 18th. If you're at G2E or at NCAI you

might have heard the chairwoman make the

announcement. The commentary closes

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That is in a week from now. February 12th. are going to give everyone here the opportunity to kind of think about what you heard today and look at what is on the web site and make your comments. All written comments and consultation transcripts are going to be posted on the tribal consultation page of the web There are already probably 12 comments site. There is at least one transcript. up. hoping to get a couple more up by the end of this week. Again, thanks to Mavis and the staff that we have in DC. But we are really committed to transparency and accountability. And one way to do that is put all the information that we have out and make it accessible to you, so you know what we have heard from other tribes. You can take a look and see what other tribes are saying and make comments based on that as well.

So, again, what Commissioner Little said we want to emphasize, these are suggestions only. We are not committed to anything that was -- that we put into the Notice of Inquiry or federal register. These are just issues that have been raised as we have done

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consultations over the summer, as we have had meetings with tribes and as we met with people at conferences. We haven't taken a position on what is included in the notice.

So very, very briefly, what regulations were included in the Notice of Inquiry? What were the issues we heard? We heard some concerns about revenue, the definitions that are in the regulations today. Also, we've heard some concerns about the bulletin that is out there and the use of net gaming revenues and whether that should be revisited as well.

Management contracts and a number of issues that come up with management contracts that we have been asked to take a look at.

Some very simple things, like changing the calculation of fees from calendar year to a tribe's fiscal year.

We've heard from our finance department that makes more sense and makes the calculation easier and simplifies the process. Using industry standards, definitions. One thing we heard about and we haven't heard anyone say that it has not been a good idea, that is to put together some sort of ticketing type system

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for when tribes submit their fees late, instead of issuing notice of violation.

As you all know, and you know, I represented a tribe for six and a half years, notice of violations are significant. They're not insignificant. They're very important, both internally for the tribe and for the people looking at the tribe. We don't want to issue a notice of violation for something that could have been an oversight in personnel changes. We heard -- was it maybe in Rapid City -- that someone, their CFO was going in for like a lung transplant, so the fees were submitted three days late and they get a notice of violation. It took them a substantial amount of time to resolve that issue. But they still -- even though they settled, they still have a notice of violation. And whether or not that is a -- that is the right way to go about dealing with late fees submissions.

The self-regulation -- regulation, whether or not the burden for obtaining that certificate, really -- there is really the benefit, if the benefit really outweighs the burden. We heard that it's not a successful

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regulation, that we need to take a look at it.

Management contracts, there is a number of issues on management contracts, that if you have some of those, if you heard about those, we do want to hear what your thoughts are on these issues.

Proceeding before the commission. I am an

attorney. I like to know what the process is.

I don't want to file an appeal and have it sit there until I am about ready to retire and then all of a sudden it is going to be addressed.

We've heard that this is something that should give -- we should provide them notice. People should know what their due process is when they come before the commission and they're filing a notice of appeal or, et cetera. So that is something else that people have said that we should consider working on.

The issue with the most press, the issue that the chairman woman said, it just sucks the air out of the room, and that is the MICS.

Sucks the air out of this room and it's over in the next room right now. But this is obviously a very important issue in Indian Country. It is something we heard about in every single

meeting, different opinions on how to deal with these issues.

My concern is from a process standpoint is how do we address the MICS, Class II, Class III, technical standards? How do we address the issue that the Colorado River Indian Tribe told me that they didn't give the agency the authority to promulgate or enforce Class III MICS? How do we deal with that, given that we have Class III MICS regulations today? What do we do about that? What do we do about that in the context of tribes that have included that in the NIGC Class III MICS in their compact and then given the NIGC authority to enforce the ordinance.

So we have a number of issues around Class III MICS specifically, and very different opinions. We do need some help figuring out how to address those.

But, you know, back to process, from my perspective, how do we also do this in a way that doesn't sort of obliterate all these other concerns and all the other issues that are as important to Indian Country and need to be addressed in the regulations. How do we do

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both things and make sure that we do the most? We need your help on that.

The pilot program for background investigations for licensing --

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MS. ALTIMUS: Can you slow down, please.

LAEL ECHO-HAWK: I have to slow down and speak slower.

The pilot program for background investigations, it has been in place for a number of years, and should we consider formalizing that in a regulation. We had a number of tribes ask us to allow access to finger printing, the finger printing process and the database that we use with the FBI for non-primary management officials or key employees.

If we were to do this it requires a change to our MOA with the FBI, but if it is something the tribes are interested in, then it is something we can look at, but we need some input.

The facility licensing regulation, we've heard over and over and over again that this regulation should be opened back up for comment, that we need to take another look at

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it. There have been some concerns that this regulation was put into place without proper consultation, that the agency fell down in the process of putting that regulation together, and that we need to go back and take another look at it.

Access and -- inspection and access to records held off site. For example, a former management company may have some financial records that they have at their facility in Vegas, and the tribe cannot get access to them. Should we specify a regulation that the NIGC has the authority to access those regulations or access those records at those sites.

Another issue that has been raised is whether or not the chairwoman or the chair of NIGC should have the authority to withdraw a notice of violation. And along those lines, we heard that perhaps we need to go back and take another look at the enforcement regulations themselves and put into regulation form a pre-notice of violation with an opportunity to comply and cure so that we don't end up just issuing a notice of violation. As I said before, they are very important. They are

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substantial -- they have a substantial impact.

And we need to be cognizant of that. If we can work with the tribe to come into compliance, perhaps we can avoid it and it will be all together. So we heard a number of consultations that that is something the NIGC should consider doing. Other federal agencies should have similar regulation. Perhaps we need to look at those types of models.

So those are the issues that have come up with current regulations. The potential new regulations that we have been thinking about or we heard issue should be formalized into regulations.

The Tribal Advisory Committee, now I know that the last couple of, probably, tribal advisory committees that the agency has worked with or has set up has been very controversial in Indian Country and people have felt like they were not heard or utilized properly. This is something we need to set the regulation how those committees will be selected and set up, what the process will be, when those committees are in -- when they are set up, and even how the meetings are conducted, the facilitator.

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Those kind of issues, and whether or not that needs to be put into regulatory form.

Sole proprietary interest, we had a number of tribes come to us on this issue as well, dealing with, you know, contract or combination of contracts that perhaps looked okay at the beginning but now appear to, at least to the tribe, to violate this local proprietary interest provisions of the act. And, you know, a lot of tribes have raised a concern that we need to put something out formally, whether a regulation, or what have you, that defines what sole proprietary interest means. And how to do that we had suggestions in California that perhaps one of the ways to do it would be redefining primary beneficiary. something that if you're interested in and you have concerns about, we definitely need to hear input from the tribes on that.

A communication policy regulation, however this works, we have been very concerned with how we communicate with you. How do we even notify you of consultations? You may or may not have noticed -- hopefully you noticed -- that when we introduced the Notice of Inquiry

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we did everything we possibly could to reach you. We did your tribal leader letters. made announcements at various venues. published the federal register, we sent it out, put it on the web site. We mailed it. faxed it. We will smoke signal, Pony Express We'll do whatever we need to do to get this information to you. But there are other things as we do engage in government-to-government consultation our obligation is to the tribal elected officials, and that situation could lead to contact, and then how do we make sure that some information that we send to tribal counsel also gets to your staff and that gaming commission or at the operations. It can get very confusing.

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Working at a tribe myself, I was just lucky that I was friends with the tribal counsel's staff and they made sure that any information they got got to me and then I filtered it down to the commission or to the gaming operation. But I know that as tribal leaders you get a lot of paperwork. Sometimes things get lost in the shuffle.

We want to make sure when we put some

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information out that it reaches everyone it should. So we need your help because you guys know how tribes work, certainly better than we do. How can we do that and be effective?

Finally, the Buy Indian Act. I know that the National Gaming Association has had an initiative for several years, let tribal operations Buy Indian from each other and we are looking at our agency. When the agency goes out to, for example, purchase meeting space like this, that we should be putting some money that funds the money from tribes, that funds the agency, putting it back into Indian Country. So that when we are purchasing goods or services, whatever they may be, that the agency is obligated by regulation to buy it and put the money that we -- that you pay in to fund our agency, that we put it back into Indian Country, so considering the binding act. We hope, you know, following the example of the National Gaming Association, we think it is an important thing, so --

Again, these are only suggestions. The commission has not taken a position on any of these, you know. We like some more than

others. We heard lots of comments. As I keep getting more comments, I'm like, "oh, we didn't think about that." So it is so vital that we get your input, that you provide us some quidance on how do we it.

Just a note, if you take a look -- the first comment we got was from San Manuel Tribe and not speaking to the substance of what their comments were, but if you look at the format, it was very helpful for us as we went through, they identified the regulation, they identified whether or not it was a issue for them, sort of what priority level, what method we could consider revising that regulation.

There is some good examples on the web site of how it might be helpful to frame your comments. But it doesn't matter how you frame them. Send them to us. We want to hear from you. We need to hear from you.

One other thing, going back to the executive order. Again, in the same section, section 3C2, this time it says "when undertaking to formulate and implement policies that tribal implications agency shall, where possible, defer to Indian tribes to establish

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standards."

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So we really can look to you and, if possible, defer to the standards that you forward to us in regard to these regulations. That is something that we are hopeful will happen, that we can be -- that Indian Country can come forward and provide us with some options that we can take a look at. We're getting to be very sophisticated. We can borrow some things from what tribes are doing.

The commentary is closed next week.

Everything will be posted on line. There is a bunch of information on line, including a number of comments and transcripts. You can send those comments to me at reg.review@NIGC.gov and they will be on the web site, hopefully within a day or two, but again, Mark has been really great about getting that stuff as soon as we get it.

The commitment from the NIGC, the commitment from myself is that every comment that is received, we will review it, we will consider it carefully. The regulatory review agenda will be accompanied by a summary of why we went a certain direction, why we are taking

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a look at regulations, and in what order and how we are going to work on them. We are going to be accountable to you. We want to be transparent. We want to tell you why we went a certain direction. If we disagree with the direction that tribes asked us to go, then we are going to explain why. We want the decision making process to be transparent. We want you to understand that we are considering everything that is sent to us.

Finally, the agenda will be completed in April, likely at NIGA. You will know what the direction is that we are going. And like I said, from today we have approximately 18 months. In April we are going have about 16. And so we need to move very, very fast. And we will be moving very, very fast. I hope that you guys will support us and that you will participate because it is only with your participation that we are going to come up with a product that is really the best for Indian Country.

The consultations are being recorded and transcribed. If you speak, please use the microphone. State your name, the tribe that

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you represent or the organization that you represent. There is still room around the table for tribal leadership. If you're sitting in the back -- you can sit in the back if you like, if you're shy, or you can come forward.

Let's see what else. If you have a written statement, if you read a written statement, that is great. If possible, give me a copy of that so that we can include it in the transcript.

And with that, I will turn it over to
Chairman Stevens and we will open the floor to
comments from you. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you, Lael.

So I know you all have been very patient, as we have been doing a lot of the talking. We wanted to get that out of the way first so we can do an overview and explain the purpose of the meeting, why we are doing what we are doing, remind everyone of what our initiatives are so you can hold us accountable and just, you know, do the brief overview of the Notice of Inquiry.

Can everyone reach a microphone? If you

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need help, let us know. We will get up and move the microphones around for you.

We are just going to open it up for comments by tribal leaders, just for the sake of protocol. I would like to give the floor over to the tribal leader first and tribal elders, or whoever the tribal leaders designate. I am happy to turn it over to tribal leadership first, if we have folks who have comments they would like to read in. If there are any questions, you're not sure about something, let us know.

Also, one thing. Her phone number is up there. Any of you who have been trying to call our office for the past week, we broke our phones. We tried to install caller ID and we broke it. We are going to fix it. We apologize. But our e-mail works. We are in South Dakota and we heard that 96 percent of the reservations out there don't have access to internet. But they can call and hope they get through. The phone lines will come in, and you may not get through to who you're looking for. So we have it set up so that if the numbers are not going to the right place, they will get the

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information to us. I apologize if you're trying to get ahold of us. We are really trying to fix it. But e-mail as well. Part of that internal stuff that we are working on, so that we get up to the 21st Century.

So I will turn the floor over to anyone who would like to ask any questions or comment. The floor is open.

Chairman Cromwell.

CEDRIC CROMWELL: Cedric Cromwell. I just want to compliment you on what you're doing with the consultation. I think this is going in the right direction. You get the stories of past. Obviously we are on that path. Seeing things that you're working on, I think it is great. I just want to make that comment. That is all. I have nothing negative to say or any suggestions, because I think you've covered what has been on my mind.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you.

GUY MICHAEL: I am Guy Michael, legal counsel for the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana.

John Paul Darden, who is our chairman, is here.

He asked me to speak to some of these issues.

First of all, on behalf of the chairman,

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let me thank the Seminole Tribe for your hospitality for allowing this conference to take place here, and also, of course, the Commission with whom we have been dealing since about 1993, with whom too that we have had a wonderful working relationship. All commissioners and staff, Cindy Altimus has been terrific and we worked with Keith in our district. He has been enormously cooperative and helpful, and Elaine Trimble Saiz, who has always made herself available to us by phone, fax or any form of communication to answer any questions we have. Very appreciative again of the excellent relationship we have been able to develop. Thank you for these conferences that give us, again, another opportunity to be able to confer and to learn how we can best serve the tribe.

In terms of any substantive remarks regarding the excellent presentation, there is one issue that I could address, because we are in the throws of it now. We don't want to have individual problems. This is more of a general nature. It is the idea of the sole proprietary interest. And given the Wells Fargo decision

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and the issues that arise with regard to financing in connection with that sole proprietary interest question.

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We as a law firm for the tribe are asked when there are financial situations to issue legal opinions as to whether or not a particular lending document is a management agreement. It is very difficult, sometimes, to do that. We appreciate the various legal opinions that general counsel has issued on that subject and we take from them. again, those are all case-by-case kinds of analyses. For us to then analogize those cases to our cases where there may be some variations becomes a little tricky. Anything that can be done to maybe more formalize or standardize the standards by which sole proprietary interest or theory is applied, especially as it relates to the banks and financial institutions. I don't know if it would be workable. But one potential idea might even be to be exempt from those determinations, banks and financial institutions that are issuing loans in the regular course of business, which for the most part, are not intended to be the management, as

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we understand it, but have certain conditions in them that do implicate those same areas, if that kind of exemption criteria could be developed within it might be very helpful.

I could go on and on with other comments.

LAEL ECHO-HAWK: Will you be submitting written comments?

GUY MICHAEL: Yes, I could do that.

LAEL ECHO-HAWK: If you have ideas, particularly with regard to that issue, we would really love to hear them.

GUY MICHAEL: Okay. Great.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: The floor is open for more comments, any questions anyone might have.

Yes, sir?

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ADMINISTRATOR MCGHEE: I am actually here -- our vice chairwoman Stephanie Bryan can't be here. She came down with the flu right before she had to fly out.

I have a statement I would like to read on her behalf, if I may. My name is Daniel McGhee, with the Poarch Creek Tribe, administrator of the Gaming Commission and Tribal Committee.

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"On behalf of the tribe I would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide comment on the Commission's Notice of Inquiry. And I especially want to thank you for taking on the ambitious goal of revamping the Commission's regulations.

In our review of the Notice of Inquiry I would say that we share the beliefs of many that we've heard speak today and at other consultations. While some of the changes contemplated by the Commission will benefit Indian Country, we feel that others will not.

In particular, we strongly discourage the Commission from expanding the definition of management contract so that it includes any contract merely because it pays a fee based on percentage of gaming revenues. Just because payment to a third party is based on percentage of revenue does not mean that the contract involves management. In our experience, these contracts have nothing to do with management, and thus to mandate their submission would be to expand the authority of the Commission beyond what was intended by IGRA.

Don't get me wrong, we appreciate that the

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Commission will review these types of agreements at the request of tribes to ensure that they don't violate IGRA. We simply believe that their submission should remain voluntary.

We also disagree with the idea of adding a definition that would require a tribe to consider cash flow out before allocating gaming revenues for non-gaming purposes.

Considerations such as these go to the very heart of tribal sovereignty and right or wrong tribes should be the ones making these decisions.

With all due respect, we think it would be a waste of time or a waste of the Commission's time to address this issue. I would venture to guess that most, if not all tribes, already do this. I know we take these type of decisions very seriously. After all, this is our future that we are talking about, the future of our members and our children. These type of decisions should remain in the hands of the tribes.

As you know, Poarch Creek operates three Class II facilities in the State of Alabama.

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Changes in the area of Class II gaming are very important to us. We note in particular that the Notice of Inquiry discusses the changes that are under way with regard to the Class II MICS and Technical Standards.

Along with Daniel McGhee and Linda McGhee and I have been very involved in the Tribal Gaming Working Group's review of the MICS and technical standards. In fact, we spent all day yesterday discussing them and will continue to do so today and tomorrow. Tribal regulators, vendors and other industry experts from all over the country have been participating in these meetings in an effort to develop a revised set of regulations that are better suited to Class II gaming. I truly hope that the work product of this group will be given great deference as the Commission considers how it will ultimately revise its regulations. Hopefully this group's work product can serve as the starting point as a Tribal Advisory Committee that then works to craft final regulations.

But one last substantive note, the idea of revamping the commission regulations on

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self-regulation is of great interest to the tribe. If done properly, we think this action alone could alleviate a lot of the pressures experienced by the Commission on a daily basis. If the regulations were more practical, and more clear, more tribes would take advantage of this program and even more of the daily regulatory responsibilities could shift to the tribes. Notably, this is exactly what IGRA envisioned. With the involvement of the Tribal Advisory Committee we believe that today's overly burdensome regulation can be crafted into something that will more closely model what was intended by congress when it enacted IGRA and we look forward to working with commission on this.

Finally, I wanted to be sure to note a concern that we have with the enormity of the task being undertaken by the Commission. I have only discussed a few of the topics raised by the Commission in the notice. There are many more that you are considering, most of which will take time to adequately address. As you've noted, your terms are not endless. As such, we want to stress how critical it is that

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the Commission set priorities and that it work closely with Indian Country as it moves forward.

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Even where the Commission decides not to act, it is important that it leave a record detailing the reasons for such inaction. Doing so will benefit the industry greatly as new commissioners take office and assess their own priorities. And by using a combination of both Tribal Advisory Commission and notice and comment rule making and by working closely with the industry we think the Commission will go a long way towards attaining its ambitious goals, otherwise, we fear that very little can be accomplished.

We thank you for your time."

I apologize, Ms. Bryan wanted to read this herself, but she asked me to do that.

I would note when she asked me to look at the regulation or self-regulation, and she asked if that would be something we would be able to do, as I was reading it, I could not answer her question. It was very vague. It was very subjective. She asked and I said I don't even know if we would imply or try to

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reach this criteria, if we could do it or if it would be a waste of our time.

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In short, I would recommend that you be much clearer. The criteria be set down to where I know I have to do this, this and this. And if I can do those things, then I have a good chance of, you know, obtaining self-regulation.

I also think that the criteria should be less objective, meaning if I submit an application on whatever self-regulation, the decision I would get from your commission would be the same the decision I would get from any other commission, because it is very black and white. It is not left up to, you know, how you felt or how you thought. So those are comments on self-regulation.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: And thank you for your comments. Will your tribe be submitting written comments?

ADMINISTRATOR MCGHEE: Yes

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: This is a concern that we have heard throughout our consultations, self-regulation regulation is a bit older, and in that time other regulations

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have been adopted by this agency. We only have two tribes, two out of 233 that are certified.

One was mandated, so one was voluntary.

So we are certainly open to ideas. First if this is a priority, but also because it hinges -- self-regulation will also hinge on the other regulations that we are dealing with. We need to know what your priority is on this.

So the floor is open again for those who have comments. It looks like we have someone in the back. No.

MR. BLUEDOG: My name is Kurt Bluedog. I am here representing Shakopec Mdewakenton Sioux Tribe. I have a question: When you're talking regulations here, I am curious as to the authority and oversight of the various federal agencies. Are you able to tell the FAC and staff what the oversight role would be with regard to the regulations revised or promulgated by the NIGC with respect to oversight on the part of the Department of Justice and perhaps the Department of Interior, particularly with those issues related to things like Class II definitions and other sort of maybe more controversial type comments?

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I am curious in terms of what the perspective of the commission is with regard to your authority to move forward with regulations. And, obviously, I know that you're mandated by the statute to implement the regulatory act.

Have you had any problems, I guess, in terms of oversight or sort of bumping? I know several years ago the Department of Justice -- there was a real split between NIGC and the Department of Justice, particularly with Class II definitions. I think there has been other instances as well. I don't mean to put you on the spot or put you in a bad position, but I am curious as to the extent of your authority on these regulations.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Well, as you said, it is mandated in the act. And, you know, I am on the tribal side when there were issues with other agencies, whether it was Interior or Justice. And what I can say about this particular administration is that we are not having those issues right now. The administration has been very clear to all of these agencies, the executive branch that, you

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know, we should be providing consistent, good government to those we serve.

So just to address that issue, and you know, I guess any particular commission can interpret the act how they want about what their authorities are, because that is how policy is. That is where policy comes in. It is an interpretation of what we are -- what our statutory mandate is.

That may come out more as we move forward in putting this agenda together. But I will say this: We are not necessarily wedded to regulations, because we are here talking about regulations. We are talking about mostly the existing regulations.

We had several people say "why do you all keep wanting more regulation?" Today the discussion is not necessarily about more regulation. What this discussion is about is what is going to be best to protect the industry. That may not necessarily mean more regulation. It may be refining the regulation that exists now. That is a natural response, given the history, to continue to see more, reach and more -- more regulation. For this

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commission that is not necessarily going to be the outcome.

What we are interested in is making sure that we stay within the statutory authority as we understand it, and that we work to -- we work with you to safeguard this industry however that might be. It may not necessarily be regulations.

We heard a lot about standards, because the act does talk about standards and regulations. And we are getting lots of suggestions about issuing standards or bulletins or guidelines or industry best practices, especially in areas where it might be gray, especially in light of the Colorado Indian Tribe Decision.

I am not sure if that answers your question.

MR. BLUEDOG: Just a brief follow up.

When you do devise regulation or new regs it

would seem that there would be a process to vet

those regs with any administrations. I am not

sure how that process works. It seems like the

office of management and budget is

administratively involved in the distribution

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that to the other affected federal agencies, and they have an opportunity then to approve or disapprove and otherwise comment or possibly even more than comment. Maybe you haven't gotten to the point where you've had to deal with that yet in terms of this administration or the NIGC.

I am just wondering if you had any thoughts on that. You don't anticipate any problems, but that may happen. I am just kind of curious as to how that process might work.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Well, thanks for bringing that up, because actually we have been thinking about it. It's one of the first things we started talking about. I am looking for my lawyer, but I think he walked out of the room.

We are talking about that, because the previous commission, it seemed or it appeared to me, as being on the tribal side and now coming in as the new chair -- how do I say this? I am trying to view their independent regulatory status, their independence very broadly.

I am probably not as -- I am not that

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like-minded about that. I think we have independence for purposes of enforcement action, because we want to be free of the politics when we have to, you know. We have to make sure that the industry is protected. We have to do that with you.

But if you read the statute, we are within the Department of Interior. The normal courses you put out of regulatory review, it does go into OMB. I do a lot of outreach. We do a lot of outreach because we take the president's directive to work with sister agencies seriously. Even if it is not formalized, we are checking in with other agencies to make sure that we are not creating inconsistency or that we are causing a problem that we don't mean to cause.

I do that quite a bit, and we reach out to justice. We reach out to -- we are working with the treasury on some things. We worked, of course, with the Department of Interior quite a bit. We are looking at that question. It is a question I had immediately coming in as having gone through the exercise, working for the Department of Interior for Indian affairs

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there was a process you went through that always involved everything going over to OMB, to their regulatory folks, and then having to work with other agencies to make sure that we didn't get in the crosshairs. That is their job. That was not a practice before. So we are looking at how we go about that, even if it is determined, you know, we do have some independence. There is some courtesy involved too, and to make some assurances, to ensure that we are not creating more problems than we are trying to solve inadvertently.

So I don't know if that addresses your question. It was on my mind immediately having come out of the DOI, and looking at the process and supporting the government initiative. We don't have an answer yet on that, but we are working with the White House, who the OMB works for, to examine to what extent do we involve -- we work with OMB. Whether it is mandatory or involuntary, but either way, we don't want to get into those crosshairs either.

Yes, Chairman Stevens.

CHAIRMAN STEVENS: Thank you, Madam
Chairwoman. I have prepared some statements

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here, so I don't want to go too long. I appreciate the opportunity. I was sitting right across from my boss so I will try to be as quick as I can.

Again, good morning. I wanted to say that it is an honor to be here. I appreciate the hospitality, the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

I also wanted to acknowledge Kurt Bluedog who just addressed us as a longstanding board member of the National Gaming Association. I just wanted to just take us through a brief statement on behalf of the National Gaming Association.

The past eight years tribal governments has had to deal with a commission that has failed to appropriately acknowledge primarily regulatory authority of tribal governments. I hope I said that as best as I could.

Instead of appropriate dialogue in collaboration and its issue overreaching mandates, in spite of these overreaching mandates the tribal leadership has worked within the law to make gaming the success that it is today.

Your track record, the current

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commission's track record, work in progress is an indication that the tribal leadership has had a consistent opportunity to engage in a productive, respectful dialogue. I think that we are encouraged by that, and we're excited by that. But, again, it's a work in progress. The ultimate reflection is what is the most important to leadership. I just want to say quickly that we wish the best to your health, your energies and your families, because we know all these leaders and the teams that represent us live this world of tribal and dialogue, so again, our best to your families.

I wanted to make sure that we made clear that when it is all done, it is our hope and desire that the product will reflect a significant voice by the tribal government leaders throughout any country. We are excited by this, but at the same time, because of the history, we continue to assert the need to hear the leadership and their teams in a productive, respectful manner. That is something we can bring forward. Of course we invite you and the rest of the leadership here to our trade show in April. We think there is a significant

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opportunity to have dialogue with a large consortium of leaders in the gaming world. We acknowledge the time and tremendous energy performed by this commission and staff, the commitment and outreach and willingness to seek out tribal leadership position is truly unprecedented. We thank you for that.

At the same time, the hard decisions are yet to be made. And I think that that is really what I want to -- really want to assert to everyone here. We have a lot of work to do.

You know, in closing I would like to say that Indian gaming has always been about self-reliance and self-governing. While we appreciate the strong partnership and working effort, federal regulations must acknowledge that tribal regulatory agencies are the primary regulators of Indian gaming.

Again, we look forward to the product and we invite you to the show. I really think, you know, I am hesitant to be excited about all this product until we can roll it out, until we actually take opportunity to roll your work and our work into the hands of leadership at our show in April.

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I think at the same time, you know, I am hesitant only because history, but the product, the effort put forward we don't want to take anything from that. As a matter of fact, I want to make sure that on behalf of the 184 tribes that I represent we say thank you. It is a new time of communication and dialogue. That is why I acknowledge you, your family and your team. I thank you for that.

In closing, I just wanted to acknowledge your chief counsel, Mr. Larry Roberts. He is, by coincidence, we happen to be sitting next to each other. We are not trying to get -- we are not trying to get any pull with him or anything like that.

God bless his late grandmother who just passed away and my grandmother who were friends. We both went back and forth in the big city. My grandmother is still hanging in there at 100 years old. These two ladies are pioneers, that had preserved Indian culture, and allowed us to be who we are. I just wanted to acknowledge Mr. Roberts in that way, these elders that keep our communities going. We have so many here in this country. I wanted to

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acknowledge their energy and spirit as we move this forward. Ultimately, what we do here is our success and future. I thank you for your time today, Madam Chair.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you,
Chairman Stevens for all those words. I was
telling Dan that the Oneida of Wisconsin over
there, he said no, it's really the Packer fans
over there. All in good words.

And we said -- we all said, all the commissioners said that we recognize the tribes who are the primary regulators. It is a virtual impossibility the way things are now and within our statutory authorities for that to be us. It is impossible.

Having come from a tribal operation and working from a tribal leadership we all, you know, have had -- all of us, the commissioners, our products of Indian gaming and the staff that we've appointed, Larry Paxton and we have others, Lael, deputy chief staff. We all are from Indian Country. We recognize that the tribes are the ones who are on the ground 24 hours, seven days a week. You are the ones who are going to have to implement these

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regulations. You know what is best for your operation. If anything, tribal is the one who have the most vested interest in protecting them. And what we have said, and what we tried to do is we try to go outside just the operation because we know that there are lives at the other end of this of what we do, the decisions we make ripple out and there are people at the other end of these decisions. It affects your operations. It affects the much needed resources you have available to you to serve your community's people. And so we recognize that.

We look forward to working with everyone. It is not always going to be perfect. We are not going to be perfect. We may not always have the answers, but we look forward to everyone coming to the table and identifying the issues, but helping us solve them too.

I understand, and we heard it pretty regularly since we have been on the road, that there is a caution that people have. The tribes have been approaching us because the history over the past eight to 10 years. And what I say to that, and what we were reminded

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of by the Oglala and the leaders from the Great Sioux Nation, we are going to be judged by our actions. I can come in here and talk and talk, and be yet another federal official that talks. I know that my actions will speak more, and that is what the history will show, or what we do. So this is just the beginning of the steps that we are taking, the action. So I appreciate that and I understand the caution and the hesitancy that tribes have, in our efforts. But all we can do is ask that you be involved, that we will include you and we will inform you.

So thank you, Chairman Stevens.

Chairman Cypress.

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CHAIRMAN MITCHELL CYPRESS: We will probably be submitting written comments regarding the regulations at this time.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Announce yourselves and then after these comments we will take a break to stretch our legs. I don't mean to rush you. I want to let everyone know that we will have a break after this comment and we will come back.

MR. WEBSTER: Thank you, Chairwoman

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Stevens. I am an attorney with Seminole Tribe here with Ed Jenkins. And we have been asked to provide a few specific comments on the Notice of Inquiry and the regulations that you're reviewing.

As an additional matter, we absolutely agree with the comments that were made this morning, the appropriateness of the process the commission is using with the Notice of Inquiry, and the respect that it demonstrates in terms of soliciting the views from Indian Country before the Commission makes a decision about which regulation it is going to undertake and both the process and priority.

So, again, we certainly commend the commission and the approach it is taking and look forward to working with the commission over the months ahead as this process moves forward.

In terms of specific regulations, we do believe our priorities of the Commission should focus on, and I will say the tribe will be following up with written comments as well. First of all, the Part 518 self-regulations, we very much agree with the comments that have

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been made earlier and the commission's own recognition that Part 518 has been seriously flawed.

As we read the statute, the statute sets out a process for self-regulation and frankly sets that -- we think it is the goal the commission should be working with tribes. get tribes to the point where tribes are self-regulatory. And the regulations that have been in place now for many years are not just burdensome and sort of the cost benefit analysis you talked about, we think they're, frankly, contrary to the statute. In terms of imposing of both requirements to achieve self-regulation and then once the tribe has attained self-regulation, imposing requirements that go so far beyond the statute that there is, frankly, no benefit to being self-regulated.

So we really think this is an area where, for a variety of reasons, this should be at the top of the -- top of the commission's list in terms of areas where the regulations can be revised.

Because this is such an important issue,

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and because we know that certainly tribes around the country are going to have their views on this and suggestions in terms as to how this might be done, we think in terms of the process that the negotiated rule making model is one that would really work well for Part 518. Again, we strongly suggest that the commission prioritize a complete revision of Part 518.

The issue with both MICS and technical standards that you referred to earlier is one also that is important to deal with and we also agree with the concerns that it not suck all the air out of the room. It's absolutely important to deal with to make technical standards. But these other issues are important as well. We recognize that they're both from the commission side and tribal side, and it will be important to have multiple tracks going on these various rules.

We also believe that, depending on the type of regulations that we are looking at, different focuses make sense. So, for example, on the Part 518 we think that the negotiated rule making model is one that the Commission

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should use.

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With respect to the MICS and technical standards, we believe that the Advisory Committee model can work, but we also agree with the comments that were made in terms of some of the problems in the past. So we really think that if the Commission does decide to used Advisory Committees and it's critical the process be opened, the tribes be able to participate and have their representatives participate without the sorts of limitations and restrictions that were in place before. But because of the technical nature of the regulations we think the expertise is out there and has been assembled. We think continuing or establishing a representative Advisory Committee for these different regulations would be appropriate.

With respect to the facility license regulations, 559, frankly we think the best approach would be for the commission to rescind these regulations. The facility license regulations, the predicate for them is a requirement in the statute that the tribes license their facilities. And as we read the

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regulations it really seems as though the commission has coopted that tribal requirement and materials are submitted to the NIGC in advance.

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We also think -- this is whether regulations are necessary or not on this next point, I think is an open question. We think that this is one where Mr. Jenkins will have some comments. The process for retaining license information, particularly negative information is one we think has some flaws that could be improved.

I am going to give the mic to Mr. Jenkins.

MR. JENKINS: I've had a lot of discussions with Cindy on this. This is where the background investigators to the tribe do the background investigations and suspend and revoke license through a revocation hearing and notification forms is sent into NIGC.

When other tribes call in and go through the tax system, I am told by Cindy, that they can't release the negative information to a third party. So what happens is the other tribes are calling in saying "what's the deal?"

And I just think if you have a TAP portal,

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the portal there that, if it's a legal hold up, whatever, if I put in information and we stand behind them, the commission stands behind them, send it to NIGC, why waste the tribe's time in releasing the information? I don't know how it's legally achieved. This is only regarding the backgrounds. And I know, unless it has changed, that it's not mandatory for tribes to do vendor registration background, but the same thing would hold true. We have over 4,000 vendors that we vendorize through the vendor That is an on-line program. program. there's a tribe out west or anywhere in the country that wants to know is that a good vendor, what do you think, Seminole, we could use the same database and go in.

Thank you.

MR. WEBSTER: The tribe may have some other suggestions, but we really think that these issues are the ones that are, from the Seminole Tribe's perspective, they should be the priority at this point. But, again, we appreciate the approach that the commission has taken and look forward to working with the commission as this process moves forward.

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CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you.

I do want to say I appreciate those comments, in particular, about information and how the NIGC can help tribes do their jobs.

As I said in my opening statement, a lot of the time that we are spending right now is our internal operations. That means we have to come up to the 21st Century. We need to be able to put these systems in place. And frankly, I think we agree with you.

We will have to figure out, and I look at my lawyer, how we -- if and how we can do that -- first, if we can do it. And when we get over that hurdle, the how is going to be a challenge for us because we are not in the 21st Century. We have some system infrastructure in our technology that needs improvement. I am a big fan -- I come from a tribe that has a very aggressive technology system. I expect the same thing. If there is other federal agencies that -- you know, I am not into reinventing the wheel so I can call it my wheel. If someone else has -- other agencies have systems that we can duplicate or that we get some ideas from so

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we can make everyone's minds easier, including, more importantly the tribes, that would be great. We know the limitations of the TAPS. So we know the limitations of the TIMIS program. We want to fix those and streamline them. So I appreciate those comments. I do want to put everyone on notice that it does -- it's going to take a lot of work on our part. We agree to just the concept of being able to have systems in place that work. This is going to take a lot on our part to put them there.

If everyone is okay, I would like to take a break so we get up and stretch our legs, use the rest room, get some fresh water and coffee. Come back in 15 minutes, which will be five after 11:00. Thank you.

(a recess was taken)

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CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: We have others that would like to come up to the microphone. That is Judy?

JUDY SHAPIRO: Good morning. My name is Judy Shapiro. I have been asked to speak on behalf of Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. I would like to thank the Seminole Tribe.

Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe is,

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unfortunately, still embracing great poverty right now up in the plains. They have a very minimal gaming presence there. They are looking to revitalize their gaming life there. But they're in South Dakota, and it's not simple. It is not simple because the compactness of South Dakota, I'm sure you're aware, is not straightforward. They're looking to improve their compact situation. They're also looking with an eye towards even if they can't improve their compact situation, they're probably going to want to do Class II gaming -to make sure that we are not talking about more regulations. We are talking about better regulations. We are talking the about the MICS and the technical standards and the work of the last eight years where many of you were on the other side trying to hold the line trying to make sure that it would still be a class II. They're never going to have a market like this. But they need to have a market that will take them to a better level of poverty.

Right now, they're remembering a year ago,
I think it was 17 years without power and water
on rez. They got taken out again in the

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summer. They need to -- you're talking about going to the 21st Century. They need an opportunity to have Class II until such time that they can have meaningful Class III. That may not come. So they need that.

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As Joe said, I know, I know that you're aware of efforts that the tribal gaming were going to put in to try to make it a Class II standards. They're much, much better than they would have been, but they're still not what they ought to be.

And I agree that the -- that should be a priority, because it is a work that was partly done and partly not so well done. It is an opportunity to take the resources that were developed back then over several years worth of resource commitment and concentration. And it is still going on across the hall, because the same people are doing similar work with the anticipation of it coming up before the commission again.

And when it does, I urge you, I urge you to use these resources. The NIGC is doing good things in terms of where it is trying to go.

But it will never have the resources that

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Indian Country is bringing to bear, because it's Indian Country's problem and it's Indian Country's priority to make sure that these opportunities continue to exist.

So I urge you as, one, to make Class II improvement a regulatory priority. And then, two, to make sure you use those resources to the best of your ability. And to go with an approved Tribal Advisory Committee that can be worked out, and to make sure that not only do you have good representative members of the community, but you have the ability to assimilate the information that all the associated tribal community can bring to you. That's it. That is the most important thing we need to do today.

I agree also with what Joe Webster said before. I think the facility licensing regulation should be withdrawn. I think it's a mistake. I think it was improper that it was promulgated and it is defective. I think that you're better off going back, consulting the tribe and finding a better regulation, not more regulations, but better regulations. Probably a separate consultation of that issue alone

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would improve that in that context. I think that is really what I need to do.

The other issue is that Cheyenne River, in the course of revitalizing its gaming, has done a lot of good training program out there. It's going to want to have a good differentiation of what the NIGC can do and what its responsibilities are, which means addressing the aftermath of CRIT more appropriately.

Guidance is very good, but it should be clear, what is the NIGC's role and what is the tribal role? I think that is something that ought to be a priority in terms of addressing the Class III MICS.

Having the information out there as guidance, as bulletins, or whatever form turns out to be useful, because I know it's a complicated setting, but there should not be confusion that would set tribes up in a bad place where the NIGC really doesn't have authority to regulate, but it's not going to be so clear to outside.

I think that that clarification is something that we should be focusing on. Thank you.

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CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you, Judy.

I do want to remind everyone that technical assistance and training is a priority of ours. The purpose of the training survey is so you can get a better understanding of what the tribes in each region need, and how we can tailor our training to meet those needs.

The survey is in on the web site, if you'd like to take a look at it. But, also, we have to go through all of our training material that exists right now and make sure that it complies with the policy of this commission.

That goes to your point, Judy, about making sure that we don't cross lines. So we are in that process. It's part of the technical assistance and training initiative, but it's also part of our management, our agency operations is how we allocate our time. The majority of our budget, 80 percent -- well, let's say 75 percent is human capital staffed, and you all know how that works. Staffing costs money, salaries, wages, taxes, benefits, and all the overhead costs associated with having one person on board. That is the

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majority of our budget. We have a fixed cost that go into that.

The best thing we can do is look at how we are spending our time. How people in the field are spending their time, and refocusing that towards the areas that we want them focused on, one of which is technical assistance and training.

We don't want them on other agendas, other priorities. They have to be working on priorities that we set for them and those priorities are based on what we hear from tribes. Technical assistance and training is one of those initiatives, and we are moving our staff towards more of a technical assistance and training mode, but there is many moving parts that we have to correct to make sure that we give tribes like Cheyenne River what they need. We would like your patience as we make those changes.

JUDY SHAPIRO: We will be working to make sure we get you that information.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Daniel, right up to your mouth so we can hear you.

MR. MCGHEE: I did want to bring up a

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couple of points I thought about while I was here, and that is the regulation 556 and 558, which is when you're doing the background, and the criteria -- because those were a long time ago. I think it would be beneficial to revisit those regulations.

I noticed from the slide show earlier that the pilot program for licensing, I don't think it is clear how someone can be a part of that. A lot of paperwork for you guys, for us. very burdensome. But I also think a lot of the information that was originally requested, requested or required to being on the background application could be revisited. Ι think a lot of information we have to ask for, but necessarily everyone -- help with determining what is actually useful, what we need or don't need. Those are regulations, and I think, maybe that is the same time you can address similar concerns about the TAP Program. Also, the MICS that you're currently working on, I think the way which it is going is trying to go in and take a lot of detail, a lot of things that may be procedures or standards, and I agree with that, to what is happening, but at

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the same time I do have a concern that NIGC understands that if that were to be the way that MICS goes in that direction, that they in turn might have to look at a lot more bulletins. I think you call them samples, for tribes. Because when we first started out we, you know, had nothing so we took a MICS. But, you know, as you grow you start to understand it more, your TICS grow.

Also, the Advisory Committees, and I think that was also fair, our suggestion will be I've noticed as being part of some those advisory committees, to not take away some fairness issues and representation issues, that this can figure out a way to make some of the advisory committees smaller. Being that we have a large representation, many different people, but it can sometimes bog it down and make it go forever. I don't know that you have an advisory committee to figure out how to make a better advisory committee, but I think, or if you have to have a advisory committee, maybe bring them into a smaller subcommittee to actually get something accomplished a lot quicker. I think that would be more

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For instance, with the MICS you have all these different sections that you can pick one person from the tribe, but no one person is going to know IT, case surveillance. Usually it takes different kind of people submitting data. That will be something we had different committees handle different portions. I don't know how it has to work, but that is something you can get products produced quicker, and a better sense of everyone's thoughts, just to consider those things.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you. I appreciate you bringing up, sort of, the challenge that we are faced with, and technical advisory committees is one example. Just generally MICS and Class III and mechanisms, because it is so different. We are in California in two cities, and there was a clear divide between the tribes, Class III and the MICS regulation and enforcement. And there was a clear set of tribes that did not.

I think what this highlights to me is the need for mechanisms that are flexible to work for as many of the tribes -- all the tribes.

My desire is there are flexible mechanisms in place to meet all of these diversities of tribes and that we have as much coverage as we can and make sure that we protect the industry at the level of protection being led by the tribes is primarily regulators. There is nobody left behind. So we are going to be looking to tribes for solutions. I think that what we are hearing, and we are open to the flexibility, not just with the Class III MICS, but also with tribal advisory committees. They suit the need of the committee, the objective of the committee.

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I am a big fan of facilitators, having come from the tribal side, but also from Department of Interior. They serve as a great traffic control. They serve as a neutral party to help the group come to a decision and move them toward to their objective rather than get bogged down, because I sat in all those meetings for years. I got stranded in Dallas, like everyone else. It's beneficial to have that kind of environment. I know that early advisory committees had facilitators.

You know, in a perfect world to me you get

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a diverse enough group and you check with tribes that are on that group should look like, and it's well represented by those who have interest but you set the ground rules when they there is this agreement. You don't bog down for hours going over one word. You break up the fights. You have a referee in the room, and everyone has to stay on the ground rules, so that you can get to -- you can finish.

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I am all for flexibility on whatever the subject is. And if that means we have subgroups, I want them to be timely. I want them to be thorough. Maybe I just want my cake and want to eat it too. They have to be quick, timely but they have to be thorough.

So I think there is a way we can do this. I think the overall goal is flexible, and not rigidity.

It looks like Judy has something to say.

JUDY SHAPIRO: I want to add one more thing in response to what you're saying. As you look toward developing these regulations, one of the things that would break up some of the fights and disagreements would be to make more use of tiered regulation. And this is

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something that we talked about a lot, and the earlier MICS you used more, and I think it is important to keep that in mind because there are tiny places and there are big places. And I think that once that flexibility is built into the regulations, I think that you may find you have fewer cause for arguments, because there are some people that say this should be our standard, and you will have others that say we can't possibly meet that standard. If you take into account the contextual basis for those arguments, you might be able to solve problems.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thanks, Judy. She was talking about for the people who could not hear her back there, the tiered that the regulations -- some folks behind you -- tiered regulations for large, medium, small size operations. What might be completely doable for one tribe will undo another tribe in terms of requirements.

Do we have other folks that want to step up to the microphone that have questions, clarifications, statements?

MR. GREEN: I promise to be nice. My

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comment is going to be about the tiering issue. The previous commission, I don't think, fully grasped, although a number of us did, that in its regulations what it sought to do was make audits easier. And if you're a sizable operation, your gaming commission management is all in favor of that. If you're a sizeable operation you want to make your audits easy. But if you're a place, as Judy pointed out, that is in Montana or in the Dakotas where you are just barely making a profit, the addition of an accounting requirement for you to add a certain type of electronic accounting which you have to go purchase, can make your entire operation unprofitable.

If you have been doing it with a hand count for 20 years we should not make it illegal to continue doing it by hand count. I understand it's not as accurate as, perhaps, a double electronic check, but the whole point of the tiering is that we allow those small operations to continue in the manner that they have proven over the last 20 years to be capable of operating.

It is -- the smaller place is too with

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tribes that are the least profitable for what they are mostly likely to open or maintain.

And the tiering is essential because it doesn't put the financial requirements in front of you to get the doors open with a small operation.

That is the point I want to be sure that I got across today, that tiering, smaller operations in places that need that smaller amount of income more than any other location. Get the doors opened and keep the doors open. While you're going to see larger tribal operations suggest, yes, these are great ideas, because we need the same concept. That is what you accomplished with the tiering.

Thank you.

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CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you. Do we have other comments, questions?

I know many tribes are, again, back to the caution element here, but also listening. That is the beauty of having an open forum. Many tribes are listening to hear what other tribes have to say and will respond to see if it offers opportunity for agreement or disagreement, ideas, suggestions that the tribe can necessarily think of when developing their

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comments. So I understand that there is more listening happening.

We are a little early for lunch. If you folks would like to break for lunch, if there is a burning desire to speak right now.

Oh, yes, sir, Mr. Frank.

I am one of the old dinosaurs MR. FRANK: of the gaming commission. I am still in the 18th, 20th Century -- 19th, 20th Century. I guess during my time when the gaming commission was created, I think NIGC had a lot of role involved in creating the passage of the law and a number of tribes that are sitting around here that were very active, and their attorneys in developing the law, as well as helping me especially when I was on the commission to talk about the regulations in the tiering process with some of the things that we had discussed. But also, at the same time, I think they also brought up a number of issues where the staff attorney brought up regarding background checks, things of that nature, in the establishment of the relationship with the FBI, creating the avenue for tribes to get access to background.

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A lot of issues were laid out and are still issues today. So I am glad that it wasn't too far off on issues that other associate commissioners at that times were discussing. I do think that there is time to review the process and update, as it has been pointed out this morning.

But the most bottom line thing that I think that every tribe has expressed during my tenure, as well as you today, especially when we had the listening conference in Mobile last year, last July. You had just come on board at that time. And your associate was chairing the meeting at that time while you were going through your process of the appointment to chair. And I think that if nothing else what was really expressed about that belief -- I want to reiterate what was said -- you said at the conference back in July that the communication was very vital between the federal government and the tribal governments in terms of the government-to-government relationship. I think we offered that over the years. Also, maintaining the business relationship which the NIGC has created, which

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is a whole different animal in which tribes were used to working with, and so for the past 20 years now or 23 years, which we are now calling protecting the industry is something that is still new in to Indian country, even after 20 some odd years, being involved in gaming.

So it's something that I think -- it is a partnership with the federal government and you're the lead agency for the government's side, federal government side, as well as those that are entering into the gaming industry.

And so with that thought, the sovereignty was the main issue which was created. As a result of that laws were passed that stabilized as to how gaming could be operated on Indian reservations, and that the role of the commission at that time was to establish standards in which the tribal government are the ones that decide whether they are going to have gaming or not, and how it's going to be played on your respective reservation or lands.

So I think, if nothing else, I think I heard that several times today directly where talking around is that communications, the most

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vital thing would be the two sovereigns here. Whether it is the United States Government or the Tribal Government.

I just wanted to remind everyone that, you know, in order to accomplish what we are looking at today and reviewing some of the old standards that was established by the first commission was part of, responsible for. So if there is something in there that you guys want to talk to me about privately. I do believe that needs to be the major dialogue as far as whether you have future hearings or future discussions with tribal leadership. I think that the tribes also have to play a role in that in terms of who they designate as far as their spokesperson, but also at the same time reminding you that the tribal leadership still makes decisions. They're the ones that have to live with the consequences of their decision in terms of whether -- how the business is run or Some of the issues, like Jess just brought up, in terms of still doing things that are not electronically or electronically possible today. And so I am a big proponent of new technologies as well. I will support that,

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the communications and understanding of operations, whether it is a business or just line of communication. But I do know and still remember those comments of some of the tribal leaders that stated, you know, we can't afford to do this or provide us equipment. We can still do it manually and still be able to get the information that is vital to the reviewing -- making sure that the standards are in place, for the purpose of entertainment and economic development.

Thank you. Congratulations on your leadership. And I know it's pretty tough coming from the tribal side to be a federal regulator, but at that time we were not regulators. So we are into the 21st Century, and I am still dragging my feet back in the 20th Century, but I am still here. But if there is anything that helps, I am always willing to do so, or as Mr. Cypress indicated, that if there is anything I can do to help the process. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you, sir, for your comments. Thank you for your time services as commissioner laying the ground

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1 work for us to do our work today.

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Let's take a break. Let's get some nourishment and make all those phone calls our cell phones are buzzing about right now. We will come back at 1:30.

(a recess was taken.)

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: I think we might have all said what we are compelled to say today. Let's get started.

So returning from lunch, I want to reopen the floor. If there is any other comments, any questions? Do we need to the clarify anything?

I do want to turn the microphone over to Dan for a little bit and see if there is anything he would like to say. He was giving me a hard time at lunch that he wasn't given a chance to talk.

Any issues that didn't come up already? I understand the tribes are really just listening at this time.

MR. BLUEDOG: Tracy, you're probably getting warn down from an eight-city tour.

Just kind of wondering, though, you have had many opportunities to listen to tribal concerns from across the country, from a wide array of

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establishments and travel entities. And maybe you can't answer this question, but are you leaning -- are you looking at regs? You have a pretty thorough look. You have been in office for over six months. Some other folks have been here longer. Are you looking at any particular regs in terms of which you ones you want to move on first or do you have any inclination which direction you want to take this regulatory review and follow up?

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: Thank you for the question. Really, the purpose of these meetings is to let -- to have tribes tell us what regs needs to come first. And, Lael, if you do not mind, I will have Lael address what we are hearing, not necessarily that it's our priority of what we are hearing in these eight places that we have gone and what we are seeing in comments that are being submitted as the priority, because that is what will drive us, is what the tribes are saying. So I will let Lael comment on that.

LAEL ECHO-HAWK: I think we have heard -- I mean, MICS is obviously a hot topic. Class II and Class III technical standards. Those

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are big issues. Licensing regulations, also we hear about every single time. The ticketing system for late fees submitted, that has also been a concern. Pre-compliance enforcement proceedings, management contracts, clarification on that, it's all proprietary interest. There has been a lot of concern about that particular issue. These are issues that the Tribal Advisory Committee formats. These are issues that come up, self-regulation is also a concern. Those are sort of the hot issues. There is some lower, sort of, hanging fruit, like changing the calendar year, to a formula based on calendar year based to fiscal year. Makes a lot of sense. Maybe some of those kinds of things that they might not get all the press, but they certainly are important.

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If we can get some of those smaller things, you know, smaller, but not less important things done, then hopefully we can do that.

I don't know if you guys think I am a little crazy. I plan on moving as fast and hard as I can. I hope that people go along

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with that. However we do it in multiple tracks, if we are doing it in kind of in a series, we will do it as fast as we can, as well as we can, so that by the time our time is up we will have done the best we can. Those are the issues that percolated to the top as the most important, but they're also large substantial issues.

So I anticipated a time frame from those to be a little longer. We are just going to move as fast as we can in order of priority, but also trying to get as much done as possible. That means addressing some of the smaller issues first and sort of concurrent with the bigger issues. That hopefully is something that we can do.

COMMISSIONER DAN ROSE: End of the session I would like to address the appreciation from the chair to the Commission for conducting these consultations. I would like to remind you we all have functioning commissions now in place. I would caution as you go forward, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Because it winds up in our hands and we have to change our processes and accommodate it.

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We are looking for a big change and we hope you will keep us involved in terms of the MICS.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: To be aware, that we should be cognizant of the effects, any change that we make will have on tribes on the regulatory bodies and coming in compliance with, even if they are modified or streamlined modifications, they are still the impact of making that change on all tribes. And we will, as we move forward in revisions, continue to ask tribes as we are making those revisions how does this effect you when we make these changes? What are the costs to you? Is this feasible? Is it possible, because you're the one on the ground every day. And you are better able to answer for your tribe or your operations or your regulatory body, your ability to comply even with what would be not necessarily more regulations, but as Judy was saying, better regulations. There is still cost involved. There is resources involved to come into compliance with the changes, and we will be aware of that. We will continue to remind ourselves and ask tribes what that might

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So that is a good reminder to us as we move forward to always ask that question. We don't want to inadvertently, what might sound good to us, inadvertently be problematic for the tribes.

Do we have any other comments? If not, I might be inclined to -- we are moving. I have to keep an eye on Jess.

JESS GREEN: I will visit with you privately.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: If there are no other questions, we do have a good announcement to make.

We have been talking and we have been asked about, in these preferences, hiring a agency, and we have adopted an Indian preference in hiring policy for the agency, just so you all know.

We have talked about it. We had to sort of iron it out and make sure that it was appropriate for our purposes. This was applied to the agency as their new agencies that open up for promotions. We believe that, similar to other agencies, like an Indian Health, BIA, BIE

that we serve just Indian Country -- to be able to work on with tribes in those situations. So that is going forward. It is not going back. It is moving forward.

Just wanted to let you all know that we have done that. We have been talking about it. Now it is done.

Did you have anything, Lael?

LAEL ECHO-HAWK: As you formulate your comments and send them to us, because there are so many issues that were percolated up, one of the key things, I think, is going to be the process.

I am a big fan of what we have done over the past eight consultations since November, which is the Notice of Inquiry, I think the process has been good.

I remember sitting on the other side of the table and not being that thrilled of the process, the complications, sat in front of it and whined about the process. I never felt it was that great. We literally had people come up to us and say it was great, the meeting was perfect, which shocks me because I certainly would never have said that on the other side.

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We do appreciate the tone that the tribes are taking with us and I appreciate everyone's goodwill in trying to do a good job.

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In moving forward we hope for the same to When we think about what process, it doesn't have to -- I don't think one -- we can be really innovated. We can go about these revisions in a number of different ways. So if certain ways are -- if the Tribal Advisory Committee is more appropriate or negotiating role making process is more appropriate in time for written comments is okay for another, then please let us know that. We don't want to be quessing. We don't want to go about it, you know, in a way that tribes are not comfortable with. At the same time, we have such a small So we need to figure out a way to do window. this and make the process move along in a good way, and while accomplishing this massive undertaking.

So please consider that. That is one of the keys to how we are going to be able to get this done. We need your input.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: With that, all the volunteers for the comments, I do encourage

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you to submit in writing written comments to us. If you have questions, please contact us.

This concludes our road trip. I was thinking about getting one of those rock T-shirts, and having all the cities listed. But I want to emphasize, this is just the beginning of a new way for the NIGC to communicate with tribes.

I think, Max, you said something to me in the hallway about, you know, you talk first, and I don't remember exactly, but you can go ahead and say it.

MAX OSCEOLA: Talking about this in the beginning, keeping it going is progress. But working together is a success.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: That is a good model to remind us of what we are doing.

There is going to be many more steps that follow this. When we effect, you know -- their policies were tribal implications. Our responsibility is to work with tribes, come up with solutions, and have tribes tell us how it affects them, also show us the way on how to solve issues.

So this is one of many more steps to come

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in the future that you will be at the table with us, not just telling us what your concerns are -- I keep emphasizing that -- but you all have to help with me with solutions too, especially in the face of differences.

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With that, I don't know if, Max, if there is anything you want to say on behalf of the Seminole Tribe before we close.

MAX OSCEOLA: I would like to thank you for this consultation. To me, it's real. You're all speaking from your heart. And in the end, we are all here to make sure the tribe runs efficient. You have your responsibilities. We do too as the tribal members.

Thank you for all the tribes that have come in to hear, because the only way that evil can succeed is for good to do nothing.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: I wish you safe travels home. I appreciate that you had to manage your travel around inclement weather. Be sure you're travelling safe home.

My hands up to the Seminole Tribe of

Florida for your gracious hospitality here. I

look forward to everyone's contact. Please do

contact us for anything, not just about what we are doing here, but anything that you might need or any questions you might have.

The premise that we operate under as we move forward, we are here to help, we are here to assist, we are here to partner and we are going to do this collaboratively on everything.

So, Dan, anything you would like to say?

COMMISSIONER DANIEL LITTLE: I too would like to obviously thank the Seminole Tribe for their hospitality.

I also want to thank our staff who did all the work and logistics in putting this thing together. Thank you. And please have safe travels home.

CHAIRWOMAN TRACIE STEVENS: With that, that concludes this meeting and wish you all well. Thank you very much for attending.

(Proceedings concluded at 2:00 p.m.)

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