

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 16, 2024

The Honorable Deb Haaland
Secretary
U.S. Department of Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland:

We write today to urge you to reject the Coquille Indian Tribe's application to have land taken into trust under the restored lands exception to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), for the development of a new Class II casino in Medford, Oregon.

Congress carefully drafted and passed IGRA to strike a balance between supporting Tribal communities through the pursuit of gaming revenues, while limiting the risks associated with gaming in communities across the country. Allowing the Coquille Indian Tribe to obtain a second casino in Medford by circumventing the customary two-part determination undermines that balance, and the grotesque outcome would result in significant harm to five other Tribes in Oregon and California. Therefore, we strongly urge you to reject this application. It must instead be subjected to a two-part determination, through which local governments and communities will have a voice in the process, as Congress intended.

While we greatly appreciate the President's commitment to advancing equity — both for and among Tribes — a decision to give an unfair advantage to one restored Tribe at the expense of so many other Tribes would stand in stark contrast to that commitment.

We urge you to immediately reject this application.

Sincerely,



ANDREA SALINAS
Member of Congress



EARL BLUMENAUER
Member of Congress



JARED HUFFMAN
Member of Congress