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Congress of the United States
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SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE
CLIMATE CRISIS

November 3, 2022

Secretary Deb Haaland
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Sear Secretary Haaland:

We write to oppose the Coquille Indian Tribe's proposal to build a new Class II casino in Medford, Oregon. This casino would be the tribe's second in the state and would have significant impacts on nearby tribes, including the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation, the Karuk Tribe, and Elk Valley Rancheria, undercutting their efforts to improve their own economies.

Tribal sovereignty allows tribes to pursue economic benefits through development of casinos on their reservations or tribal trust land. The Coquille Tribe currently operates a Class III gaming facility in North Bend, Oregon, but is now seeking to build a new casino in Medford though the Coquille Restoration Act (CRA) – a move that threatens to bring major gaming conflicts to Southern Oregon and Northern California.

We believe that the CRA was not meant to benefit one tribe over others, and it is critical that the requirements of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) not be considered subservient to the newer legislation. Doing so would upend a system that for decades has allowed tribes to seek economic security. We also strongly urge the Interior Department to closely consider technological changes over the past forty years that effectively make new Class II casinos operate much more like Class III casinos, and this should be reflected in the required Environmental Impact Statement for Coquille's fee-to-trust application for the Medford land.

We ask that the Interior Department process the Coquille Indian Tribe's fee-to-trust application for its proposed Class II casino as required by the IGRA and in keeping with the original intent of the CRA. Please contact our offices if you have questions or need further information.

Sincerely,



JARED HUFFMAN
Member of Congress

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