



PONCA TRIBE OF NEBRASKA

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Ponca Tribe of Nebraska Releases Economic Benefits of Carter Lake Casino Resort

Iowa's Governor prompts response

OMAHA (June 13, 2008) – The Ponca Tribe of Nebraska released facts related to their planned casino resort in Carter Lake, Iowa today showing their project will create nearly 1,800 new jobs, draw approximately 2.9 million visitors annually and increase the annual economic output of Iowa and Nebraska by nearly \$130 million.

The Tribe decided to share the information after the State of Iowa refused repeated requests to meet with tribal leaders and publicly announced intention to challenge a National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) decision allowing gaming on the Tribe's restored lands.

“Out of respect to Iowa, we held the details of our world-class casino resort until the State had time to understand the sound arguments and facts presented in the NIGC final decision and ruling,” said Larry Wright, Jr., chairman of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska's Tribal Council. “But now our tribal members and the citizens of Iowa need to understand what's at stake.”

The Tribe also responded to the State of Iowa's decision to challenge the NIGC determination.

MORE

“As early as October, 2000, the Tribe said publicly that it could pursue gaming in Carter Lake as an economic development engine,” said Wright. “We didn’t enter Carter Lake intending to build a casino, but after seeing the benefits gaming provides other Iowa tribal governments, we decided to exercise our rights to provide for our people.”

In 2002, the Tribe’s gaming ordinance was approved by the NIGC. In December 2007, the NIGC authorized gaming on five acres of trust land in Carter Lake. The only remaining step before construction is negotiating a compact agreement with the State of Iowa.

“The State of Iowa needs to stop avoiding the issue,” said Wright. “They’ve negotiated gaming compacts with three other Native American tribes and allowed other gaming to expand across the state. We’re no longer willing to be singled out in order to protect the corporate interests that oppose us.”

In a June 13 letter to Governor Culver, Wright asked for the State to reverse course on legal action and meet to discuss the casino resort.

“The Governor has an open invitation to speak with us on a government to government basis at any time,” said Wright. “Obviously, he must first deal with the unfortunate loss of life this week and the ongoing devastation caused by the flooding. The Ponca Tribe and people stand ready to assist in any way we can, and we look forward to discussing the details of our Carter Lake casino resort and how the people of Carter Lake, the citizens of Iowa and the economy in general will benefit from a Compact agreement with the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska.”

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EDITOR’S NOTE: background material on the casino resort is available at <http://www.poncatribene.org> today.