

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 9, 2008

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H 204 Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510-0001

Dear Madam Speaker:

As members of the Congressional Gaming Caucus, we are writing to express our strong opposition to consideration on the House floor of two bills that would promote off-reservation Indian gaming.

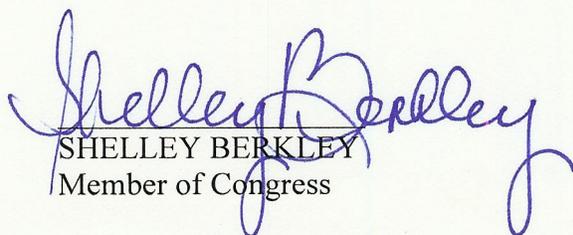
HR 2176, introduced by Rep. Bart Stupak, and HR 4115, introduced by Rep. John Dingell, would allow two Michigan tribes, the Bay Mills Tribe and the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe, to build and operate gaming facilities hundreds of miles from their reservations. We strongly oppose these bills, which would undermine the intent of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) by allowing these two tribes to engage in "reservation-shopping."

Under IGRA, the Bureau of Indian Affairs can approve gaming on newly acquired land taken into trust under very limited circumstances. In the case of the Bay Mills and Sault Tribes, each of which already has gaming on its reservation lands, a suspect land claim was used as a bargaining chip in settlements with the Governor in which the tribes agreed to renounce their claim and receive alternate properties closer to the population center of Detroit. In fact, a representative of the Sault Tribe described the deal as "shady" in his Senate testimony in 2002, before his tribe became party to the agreement. Congress is now being asked to ratify this shady deal.

We do not begrudge the Bay Mills and Sault Saint Marie Tribes, or the Michigan communities of Port Huron and Romulus, their desire to participate in gaming, but we do take issue with them seeking special legislation that would allow them to compete with existing facilities under a different set of rules. These bills offer a blueprint to any Indian tribe that wants to circumvent the laws regulating Indian gaming in order to build a casino outside the boundaries of its sovereign territory.

We urge you not to schedule these bills for consideration in the House. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

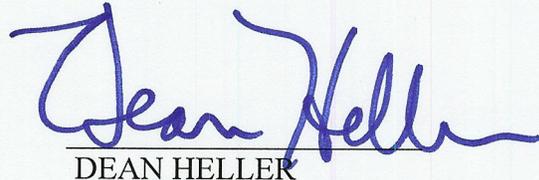
Sincerely,


SHELLEY BERKLEY
Member of Congress


CAROLYN KILPATRICK
Member of Congress



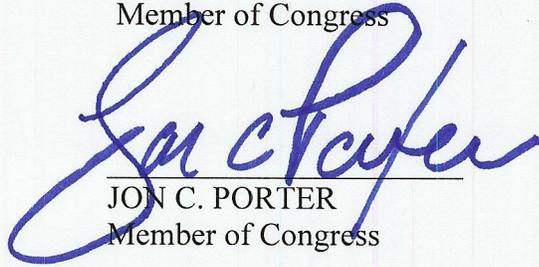
FRANK LOBIONDO
Member of Congress



DEAN HELLER
Member of Congress



BENNIE G. THOMPSON
Member of Congress



JON C. PORTER
Member of Congress