

HEATH SHULER

11TH DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

512 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
PHONE (202) 225-6401
FAX (202) 226-6422

356 BILTMORE AVENUE, SUITE 400
ASHEVILLE, NC 28801
PHONE (828) 252-1651
FAX (828) 252-8734



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-3311

June 18, 2008

DEPUTY AT-LARGE WHIP

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC LANDS

COMMITTEE ON
SMALL BUSINESS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
RURAL AND URBAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP
CHAIRMAN

Dear Blue Dog Coalition Member:

Next week the House of Representatives is due to consider two bills, H.R. 2176 and H.R. 4115, that would authorize two Indian Tribes in Michigan to build casinos 350 miles from their reservations and in the ancestral lands of another Tribe.

I voted against these bills in the Natural Resources Committee because I was concerned by the precedent that would be set by allowing Indian tribes to go hundreds of miles from their reservations to open up casinos outside of their ancestral boundaries.

There is Indian gaming in my home state of North Carolina and it is conducted on the tribe's reservation lands. I think we can all agree that Indian gaming should not be conducted wherever a tribe wants to put a casino. In my meetings with Indian tribes on this issue, they expressed their strong views that the passage of these bills would undermine the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act and would actually hurt Indian Country.

In addition, it is my understanding that the two tribes in Michigan seeking these casinos have sued innocent landowners in order to try to establish a land claim. However, it was noted in the Natural Resources Committee that this land claim was rejected in both federal and state courts. I am concerned these bills will only encourage tribes across the country to begin suing innocent landowners in the hopes of getting a casino from Congress.

Before you cast your vote, I would encourage you to review the following information that discusses these bills in more detail. It is important to note that these bills are opposed by the U.S. Department of Interior, a bi-partisan majority of the Michigan Congressional delegation, and over 60 Indian tribes from around the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Shuler', with a large circular flourish at the end.

Heath Shuler