



Media Contact

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Who We Are

The California Nations Indian Gaming Association (CNIGA), founded in 1988, is a non-profit organization comprised of federally recognized tribal governments.

Our Mission

To protect the sovereign right of tribal governments to operate gaming on federally recognized Indian lands.

What We Do

CNIGA acts as a planning and coordinating agency for legislative, policy, legal and communications efforts on behalf of its members and serves as an industry forum for information and resources.

Economic Impact of Tribal Government Gaming on CA

IN 2014, CALIFORNIA TRIBAL GAMING:

1. Generated a record **\$7.8 billion in economic output**
2. Added **\$5 billion in value** to the California economy
3. Supported **63,000 jobs** statewide
4. Provided **\$3.3 billion in worker earnings**
5. Produced nearly **\$400 million in state and local tax revenue**

Important Historical Milestones

California Indian tribes, once impoverished and dependent on government subsidies, are finding prosperity and self-sufficiency through tribal gaming. Important historical achievements that led to this include:

- 1987: the **U.S. Supreme Court** recognized **the inherent right of Indian tribes to offer gaming on tribal lands** (California v. Cabazon).
- 1988: Congress passed the **Indian Gaming Regulatory Act ("IGRA")**, creating the statutory framework for tribal governments to engage in gaming as a means of promoting tribal economic development, self-sufficiency, and strong tribal governments.
- 2000: **California Proposition 1A, which passed with an astounding 64.5% "YES" vote**, amended the Constitution to allow tribal governments to operate slot machines, lottery games, banking and percentage card games in accordance with federal law
- 75 tribes have signed tribal-state gaming compacts since 1999, which include:
 - Provisions for revenue sharing with non-gaming tribes
 - Environmental protections
 - Labor agreements

Protecting the sovereign right of California tribal governments to operate gaming on their lands.



Relevant Facts About Indian Gaming

Revenues Fund Government and Charitable Projects

- Revenues from tribal government gaming operations are used for governmental and charitable purposes. Indian tribes are using gaming revenue to build houses, schools, roads and sewer and water systems; to fund the health care and education for their people; and to develop a strong, diverse economic base for the future.

Native Americans Pay Taxes

- All Indian people pay federal income, FICA and social security taxes. Only the small percentage of Indians who live and work on their own federally recognized reservations – not unlike soldiers and their families living on military installations – are exempt from paying state income and property taxes. However, they still pay taxes such as sales and all other special excise taxes.

Tribal Government Gaming is Highly Regulated

- The tribes, as governments, are the first to be vigilant in protecting the integrity of projects they rely upon to feed, clothe, educate and employ their people. Tribal governmental gaming is regulated on three separate and distinct levels, in contrast to the single level of regulation required for commercial gaming.

Thousands of People are off of Welfare because of Tribal Government Gaming

- Reservations are slowly recovering from decades of failed well-meaning governmental programs. Indians and non-Indians are proudly leaving welfare rolls and getting payroll checks. They are taxpayers instead of tax users.

Remote Locations of Reservations Make Self-Reliance a Challenge

- Tribal Government gaming is the first – and only – economic development tool that has ever worked on reservations. The majority of reservations are in remote, inconvenient locations on land that nobody else wanted. Before tribal government gaming, there had been little success with public or private sector economic development on reservations. The National Gambling Impact Study Commission found that “no other economic development other than gaming has been found.” Moreover, tribal governments are using gaming proceeds to diversify and conduct other economic enterprises.

The Exclusive Right to Gaming is CRUCIAL

- Because it is the only means of Self-Reliance, it is essential that in California, Gaming remains restricted. Due to the multitude of benefits to Indians and non-Indians alike, the expansion of gaming would immensely threaten the ability for surrounding communities to continue to receive the community and fiscal support for issues that concern them.

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For additional information, assets, or any other media inquiries, please contact:

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