



## **CNIGA Policy Statement Supporting Federally-Recognized Tribes and Indian Lands**

The California Nations Indian Gaming Association (CNIGA) is an intergovernmental, intertribal association composed of federally-recognized, sovereign Indian tribes in the state of California. It is a stated purpose of CNIGA to protect the sovereignty of Indian tribes. CNIGA adopts the following policy supporting federally-recognized tribes and Indian lands.

### Policy Statement

As a result of the government-to-government trust relationship between federally-recognized tribes and the United States, the federal government has a fiduciary duty to do all in its power to protect the status of federally-recognized Indian tribes and their lands from any and all efforts to terminate that status. CNIGA considers any failure on the part of the United States to properly fulfill that duty to be a breach of trust by the United States warranting appropriate legal and political action.

Federal recognition of an Indian tribe's sovereign governmental status, and of the sovereign status of the tribe's land, is a matter of authority and jurisdiction vested pursuant to the U. S. Constitution and laws of the United States solely in the federal government. Once federal recognition is extended to an Indian tribe, the state and local governments are preempted under federal law from interfering with that Indian tribe's exercise of all rights and privileges derived from its status as a federally-recognized Indian tribe and from the status of its lands as federally protected Indian lands.

*The foregoing CNIGA Policy Statement was adopted by the CNIGA membership at a regular meeting on May 15, 2003 at the Singing Hills Resort in El Cajon, CA.*

*Re-affirmed October 20, 2016*

*Amended October 6, 2022*

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**Protecting the sovereign right of California tribes to operate gaming on their lands.**