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December 15, 2016

Honorable Henry John Bear  
State Representative – Houlton Band of the Maliseet Indians  
41 Elm Street  
Houlton, Maine  
04730

RE: Proposed Maliseet Casino for Aroostook County

Dear Representative Bear:

The recent news that the Houlton Band of the Maliseet Indians intends to continue to press on with the goal of establishing a casino in the Houlton area is very good to hear. In the Maine Senate's failure to pass LD 1298, as amended, a clear opportunity that would have benefitted not only the People of the Maliseet Tribe, but also the community of Houlton, the County of Aroostook as well as the entire State of Maine was lost. I have tried to understand the arguments that were presented as opposition to the proposed casino, and find that I cannot for many reasons.

For certain members of the Maine Senate to justify their rejection of a well thought proposal that would bring many opportunities for economic growth, employment, and an improved standard of living for the deserving Aroostook County residents by citing the need to protect existing casinos' income streams or a need to delay a positive decision based upon the perception of the need for another study to develop another policy, do not successfully hide a thinly veiled objective of denying success to another region in order to improve political opportunities in their own districts.

It is a simple truth to say that the government's protection of the income streams of competing businesses is contrary to the concept of a free economy and stifles opportunity.

I sincerely hope that no members of the Maine Legislature stated that their opposition to this project was based upon their version of morality. Such an argument flies in the face of today's reality. Maine has licensed gambling facilities; a State sponsored lottery system, as well as race track betting operations. For a member of Maine's Legislature to object to a casino based upon his or her moral viewpoint is a demonstration of duplicity and clearly insincere.



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The studies have shown that this casino venture would be a success. The Maine Legislature should act in favor of this proposed venture to allow for the beginning of a economic renaissance for the greater Houlton region before another opportunity is finally lost. The revenue streams from this operation and the many businesses it will spawn will also improve the chances of success for the current struggling area businesses and will result in the ability to enhance area educational facilities resulting in the retention of young people who will be trained in all aspects of business requirements. Those opportunities are not available now, but could be with the building of this project.

As a business owner and employer with over 35 years in a company that has 70 years of history of doing business in the State of Maine, I have, and my company has, witnessed the successes and failures of many attempts at business ventures. It is tough to do business in the State of Maine for many reasons. But one of the reasons for it to be tough to do business in Maine should not be because of government interference or manipulation.

Our company fully supports your efforts to bring a 21<sup>st</sup> Century opportunity to the residents of the State of Maine and especially for the Maliseet People and their neighboring communities.

Thank you for continuing your efforts.

Mitchell P. Sammons  
Sr. Vice President and Principal