

For immediate release

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TASIN Thanks Legislature and Urges Passage of Urgency Measure to Appropriate Funds for Local Governments this Year

July 29, 2003, Inland Empire – The Tribal Alliance of Sovereign Indian Nations (TASIN) thanks the Legislature for their actions today and calls it them to pass urgency legislation that will ensure the disbursement of funds from the Indian Gaming Special Distribution Fund (SDF) for local governments impacted by tribal government gaming.

Earlier today, the State Assembly passed AB 673 (Horton), a measure that will distribute funds from the Indian Gaming Special Distribution Fund for the purpose of backfilling the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund and providing monies for problem gambling programs. AB 673 is now on its way to the Governor's desk for signature.

"We applaud Senator John Burton and Assembly member Jerome Horton and the entire Legislature for its efforts to make sure monies are distributed to all eligible tribes and to provide funding for problem gambling programs," said TASIN Secretary Patrick Murphy. "In addition, distributing monies for local governments this year is critical. We look forward to working through the issues to pass an urgency bill that will provide much-needed funds for local communities surrounding tribal casinos before the end of this year."

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"Tribal governments have been paying into the fund since October of last year. We want to keep our promise to the voters and ensure monies are returned to local communities for the benefit of millions of Californians," said TASIN Treasurer Rosemary Morillo.

In March 2002, TASIN reached out to local governments surrounding tribal casinos to form and participate in the Local Government Committee (LGC), a diverse group of local governments from Riverside, San Bernardino and Santa Barbara Counties representing all sectors of local government -- cities, counties, police, fire, and sheriffs departments.

In a landmark model of outreach between tribal governments and local governments, the TASIN-LGC has worked diligently to develop a fair and practical proposal to allocate and distribute monies in the Indian Gaming Special Distribution Fund to local governments.

"TASIN wants to ensure that the promises that the tribes and the state made to the voters to provide monies for local communities are kept," said TASIN Chairperson Lynn Valbuena.

"That is why it is very important that the joint TASIN-Local Government Committee proposal be enacted into law."

It is estimated that TASIN tribes will contribute more than \$1 billion into the SDF through 2020, an estimated two-thirds of the fund. The SDF is funded by tribal government gaming operations.

In accordance with the Tribal-State Compact and the will of the voters, the TASIN-LGC proposal provides funding for local governments, the Division of Gambling Control, and the Gambling Control Commission.

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The proposal also sets aside several million dollars for counties that are impacted by the casinos of tribes that do not pay into the SDF because those tribes operated no or fewer than 200 gaming devices on September 1, 1999.

“The TASIN-LGC SDF proposal will provide much-needed funding for impacted communities throughout the state from Del Norte County to San Diego County,” said Banning Police Chief Michael Brooks, Chairman of the TASIN-Local Government Committee.

The TASIN-LGC SDF proposal has statewide support from cities and counties, the California Nations Indian Gaming Association (CNIGA), law enforcement organizations, as well as from more than 50 tribal governments.

The SDF was created through the Tribal-State Compact and is designed to help support local governments and communities impacted by tribal gaming facilities. The fund also provides financial assistance for:

- problem gambling programs and organizations;
- shortfalls in the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund, an account established to assist non-gaming tribes throughout the state;
- provide compensation to the state for incurred regulatory expenditures.

TASIN is composed of the federally recognized tribes in Riverside, San Bernardino and Santa Barbara Counties.

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