



DALE E. KILDEE  
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

FIFTH DISTRICT  
MICHIGAN

September 30, 2003

Mr. Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Oak Productions, Inc.  
3110 Main Street, Third Floor  
Santa Monica, CA 90405

Dear Mr. Schwarzenegger:

As a leading advocate for Native Americans in Congress, I am writing in response to recent misstatements by you relating to the status of Indian tribes in the state of California and the distribution of Indian gaming revenue. Your uninformed statements demonstrate a lack of knowledge and respect for our country's First Americans.

Indian tribes are not "special interests," they are sovereign governments. The U.S. Constitution (particularly Article I, Section 8), federal law, federal court decisions, treaties, agreements and executive orders recognize that Indian tribes retain the power of self-government over their lands and their citizens. While we cannot erase the deplorable history of Indian policy in the United States, current federal policy supports tribal self-government and the development of reservation economies.

Your claim that Indian tribes pay virtually nothing to the state of California is also false. Through their tribal-state gaming compacts, which were approved by the California legislature, tribes make annual payments of more than \$100 million to the state and \$30 million to the non-gaming tribes. These payments help other tribal governments that do not have gaming operations, and assist local communities with costs associated with tribal casinos.

Indian gaming has been the most successful economic development tool for many tribes. Tribal governments all over the country are rebuilding infrastructure long neglected by the federal government and providing increased levels of services to their members. In addition, the California Indian tribes, their more than 40,000 employees and their vendors pay more than \$280 million annually in federal payroll and income taxes, and millions more in state income, sales and other taxes.

By unfairly targeting tribes who are making money for the first time since the United States began implementing policies designed to terminate tribal nations and their culture, you are doing a great disservice to this country by perpetuating erroneous beliefs about Native Americans among the people of your state. I hope that you will educate yourself about the U.S. Constitution and California Indian history and policy, and use that information for future discussions on American Indians. The Native American citizens of California deserve no less.

Sincerely,

Dale E. Kildee, M.C.

