



Tohono O'odham Nation Office of the Chairman & Vice Chairwoman

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SENATE HEARS TESTIMONY ON JOB-KILLING LEGISLATION TO STOP THE WEST VALLEY RESORT

Leaders from Glendale, Tohono O'odham Nation, and the federal government speak out against the bill

SELLS, Ariz. – Today, the U.S. Senate Indian Affairs Committee heard testimony on S. 2670, the so-called “Keep the Promise Act of 2014.” This proposed legislation seeks to halt the Tohono O'odham Nation's West Valley Resort and Casino project and stop the creation of thousands of jobs in the West Valley. The Nation recently broke ground on its resort-casino project and construction is underway.

After having lost 16 straight court and federal agency decisions, S. 2670 is a desperate last ditch effort by two wealthy tribes to protect their market share by preventing the Nation from moving forward. The cities of Glendale, Peoria, Tolleson, and Surprise, the U.S. Department of the Interior and tribes from across the United States all oppose this bill and its companion in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Speaking on behalf of the City of Glendale, Councilmember Gary Sherwood testified against S. 2670, urging the Committee “not to destroy this valuable partnership between the Tohono O'odham Nation and my community.” Councilmember Sherwood told the committee that Glendale's agreement with the Nation has already attracted interest from developers looking to invest in locations near the project and will deliver tremendous economic benefits to the West Valley.

U.S. Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Kevin Washburn testified that it was “ironic” that the Keep the Promise Act would break “the only promise being considered today”—the federal government's promise to the Tohono O'odham Nation. Assistant Secretary Washburn laid out how the clear language of federal law and the state gaming compact allows the Nation to move forward, while the proposed bill would unilaterally rewrite those agreements years after the fact.

Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman Ned Norris, Jr. said “*It is the Nation's great hope that the U.S. Senate will reject this attempt at special interest legislation and hold true to the promise the federal government made to us almost thirty years ago. We are committed to moving forward with our project to create jobs and opportunity in the West Valley.*”

The Tohono O'odham Nation is a federally-recognized Indian tribe, with existing reservation lands in Maricopa County, Pinal County, and Pima County, Arizona. The West Valley Resort is located at 95th and Northern avenues and will generate thousands of new jobs and more than \$300 million in annual economic impact. For more information, visit www.westvalleyopportunity.com.

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