



TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION  
OFFICE OF THE  
CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

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O'ODHAM HA-WE:HEJED

*"For the People"*



Wednesday, May 17, 2017

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**TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION AND STATE OF ARIZONA SETTLE CASINO LITIGATION**

PHOENIX, ARIZONA --- The Tohono O'odham Nation and the State of Arizona jointly announced today an agreement to settle their dispute regarding the Desert Diamond Casino West Valley near the City of Glendale.

Under this agreement, the Nation will move forward with Class III gaming at its West Valley facility under an amended tribal-state gaming compact. The State will process the West Valley facility's Class III gaming certification and liquor license in the normal course of the regulatory process. The State has also agreed that it will not oppose the Nation's efforts to have its land immediately adjacent to the West Valley facility taken into trust.

In exchange, the Nation has agreed not to conduct Class II or Class III gaming anywhere else in a designated geographical area that includes metropolitan Phoenix during the term of the agreement. Additionally, although the Nation will retain its ability to acquire new reservation land under the terms of Public Law 99-503, known as the "Gila Bend Indian Reservation Lands Replacement Act," the Nation also has agreed not to request that the Secretary of the Interior take any other land in that area into trust for the purpose of gaming during the agreement term. These restrictions will terminate if federal or state legislation is enacted that bars the Nation from conducting Class II or Class III gaming on the West Valley land, or if another tribe conducts Class III gaming on new trust lands in the designated geographical area.

As part of the agreement, the State and the Nation will amend their existing compact to confirm that the Nation may conduct Class III gaming at one gaming facility on its West Valley land, but nowhere else within the designated geographical area. This compact amendment must be reviewed and approved or deemed approved by the Secretary of the Interior before the settlement agreement becomes effective.

This agreement will last for the remainder of the term of the Nation's current tribal-state gaming compact plus the term of any successor compact or, if there is no successor compact, for 15 years after the agreement becomes effective.

The agreement puts to rest the last pending lawsuit over the West Valley facility. As part of the agreement ending the litigation, all parties will bear their own attorneys' fees for all of the legal proceedings relating to this dispute.

Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman Edward D. Manuel said, *"This is a day the Nation has long been working toward. It establishes an agreement concerning the Nation's ability to conduct Class III gaming on its West Valley land and it brings to an end the final dispute that was constraining this important project. The Nation is eager to continue with its West Valley investment to create thousands of new jobs, positive economic development, and a world-class casino resort that all of Arizona can be proud of."*

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Arizona Governor Doug Ducey said, *“This agreement is a major victory for Arizona, one that ensures that there are meaningful restrictions on additional casinos in the greater-Phoenix-metro area.”* Governor Ducey went on to say, *“This agreement brings the litigation on this issue to a close. It is time for us to move forward together. I am eager to continue meeting with gaming tribes to discuss how we can modernize the tribal-state gaming compacts and create positive economic opportunities for all Arizonans. I welcome the Tohono O’odham Nation to this process.”*

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