



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

YOLO COUNTY

140 TONY DIAZ DRIVE, WOODLAND, CA 95776

(530) 668-5280 WWW.YOLOCOUNTYSHERIFF.COM

TOM A. LOPEZ
SHERIFF ~ CORONER
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR

DALE JOHNSON
UNDERSHERIFF

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June 15, 2020

Senator William Dodd
senator.dodd@senate.ca.gov
State Capitol, Room 4032
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

Re: OPPOSE SCA - 6 (Dodd), As Amended

Dear Senator Dodd:

In my capacity as Sheriff for Yolo County, I write to oppose SCA 6 (Dodd), as amended, a measure that would reward California cardrooms (an industry with a record of engaging in illicit activities), at the expense of tribal governments, which provide considerable and regular support to their local communities. These tribal partners provide essential funding for a variety of local needs that would otherwise be unmet, including fire protection, healthcare, infrastructure and of course, law enforcement. SCA-6 seeks to scale back tribal government gaming rights, and by extension, ultimately interfere with their ability to support their surrounding communities.

Like the rest of this state, the Yolo County Sheriff's Office is very concerned with the toll this pandemic has on governmental budgets and understands the need for new revenue. However, tribal governments are not immune to the disastrous economic effects of this pandemic. They acted quickly and responsibly by closing their gaming facilities, their main and sometimes only source of revenue, to protect the public health. Their economies have been devastated, and I submit now is not the time to offer a measure that would seriously undermine their constitutionally-based gaming rights.

At the same time, it is difficult to justify rewarding California cardrooms, an industry that has a record of not only participating in activities that are apparently illegal, but that all too often involves criminal activities. On the first point, there would be no need for a constitutional amendment if the cardrooms played games that were "already authorized." On the second point, California cardrooms have not acted responsibly, and with integrity, in their operations. As an example, a number of card rooms and their owners have been penalized more than \$30 million by the Federal Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) for violating anti-money laundering laws, and for hiding profits to avoid taxes and payments to gambling addiction programs. These violations are recent, not dated. Money laundering laws exist to protect against terrorist activities, human trafficking, drug dealing, and other crimes. As a law enforcement agency, we simply cannot condone a measure that supports an industry engaged in illegal, let alone, criminal activities.

"Honored to Serve"

I understand the measure would also grant tribes and horse racing tracks the right to engage in new games, including sportsbook on mobile devices, and on the Internet. I have significant concerns surrounding the prospect of Internet gaming, which needs to be effectively regulated, if it can be, to protect against corruption, and of course, minors from its perils. Such a measure should be carefully analyzed and broadly debated before passed through the Legislature and placed on the California ballot. There is absolutely no need to rush a measure of such significance.

For all these reasons, I have no option but to express my opposition to SCA-6.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Lopez", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Tom A. Lopez
Yolo County Sheriff