



October, 2006

Dear Citizens for our Community:

Last month, we had a September Newsletter almost ready to mail; however, circumstances prevented its completion. Thankfully, we now have it done so let's jump right in.

On the local level, the HoChunk Nation applied to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to have their land in Lynwood (119 acres) placed into federal trust. If approved, this land will forever be removed from property tax rolls and become sovereign territory of the HoChunk Nation (free from the control of the State of Illinois, the county of Cook, and the Village of Lynwood). It would likely be the first Illinois tribal land-based mega-casino. We need political pressure from our state officials and ask you to write them asking for their active opposition to this application. (Contact information is on back of this letter.) The HoChunk Nation is already bringing mega-bingo to the HoChunk soccer complex. According to a mailing sent by the bingo company, Bingo-4-U, along with subsequent news articles, renovation was done to accommodate video bingo machines, and bingo-like raffle is in operation at the complex. This is particularly dangerous as it is a very small step from video bingo to video poker. Other tribes have successfully started with bingo and later converted to full-blown casinos, with little or no notice to the states. (Read the enclosed article by Elaine Willman entitled "The Great Casino Camouflage".) It is imperative that we let our State Senators and Representatives know we are opposed to mega bingo coming to the soccer complex, the same complex promised to be a place where the youth of our area would be able to play sports.

On the state level, with elections coming up in November, all of our representatives and some of our senators are up for re-election. Some of the candidates are opposed to the HoChunk proposal and are opposed to gambling in general. This is a very important opportunity to either get the incumbents to change their stand about the proposal (publicly) or to vote in someone who does stand against this casino proposal. State Senator Debbie Halvorson and State Representatives George Scully and David Miller have not definitively taken a position against the casino proposal despite numerous calls, emails and letters from C4C and C4C supporters. It is possible that with enough calling and enough letter writing, we can get the incumbents to take an OFFICIAL stand publicly against the HoChunk casino proposal and also get them to ask the Department of the Interior to deny the HoChunk's request to have the land put into trust for the purpose of gambling.

Unfortunately, both Gov. Blagojevich and Judy Topinka support gambling as a source of revenue. We, as C4C, have decided not to endorse any one political party. The final vote must be made by you after considering all the issues. We are in agreement with the positions against gambling of both Randy Stufflebeam of the Illinois Constitutional Party and Rich Whitney of the Green Party. The Illinois Constitutional Party websites platform states, "*Gambling promotes an increase in crime, destruction of family values, and a decline in the moral fiber of our country. We are opposed to government sponsorship, involvement in, or promotion of gambling, such as lotteries, or subsidization of Native American casinos in the name of economic development. We call for the repeal of federal legislation that usurps state and local authority regarding authorization and regulation of tribal casinos in the states.*" The Green Party website states gambling "*preys especially on the poor and the desperate, and brings ruin and misery to far more working class families than the few who luck out.*" [Information is provided on where the Illinois Candidates for Governor and for the General Assembly stand on gambling by the Illinois Church Action Against Alcohol and Addiction (ILCAAAP). Go to our C4C website at: [www.citizens4community.org](http://www.citizens4community.org).]

On the federal level, a delegation of C4C members recently traveled to Washington, DC to meet with federal officials regarding the trust application and it's casino proposal. Prior to this, we obtained a copy of the

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Application for Fee-To-Trust Transfer of Title to Property in Trust for the HoChunk Nation required under the Land Acquisitions Regulations, 25 C.F.R. Part 151.11. This HoChunk application states, “*The justification for the application is that the Nation needs the land for the establishment of a gaming facility and gaming related facilities, including a hotel and related businesses, retail and/or recreation in nature. The Property that the Nation wishes to have transferred into trust, which is located near Chicago, Illinois, is suitable for gaming, as it is close to a significant population center and is easily accessible...*” It goes on to state, “*The intended purpose of the acquisition is to conduct gaming and offer gaming-related facilities. The gaming facility shall consist of slot machines and table games. The gaming-related facilities shall include, but not be limited to a hotel and related businesses, retail and or recreation in nature as defined by a tribally-approved business plan.*” We are dealing with is a flawed federal policy that is unconstitutional at its core and is discriminatory against most of the citizens of the United States. It is flawed in that allowing tribes to have unregulated gambling does nothing more than enrich the leaders of the tribes and lobbyists such as Jack Abramoff. It is discriminatory in that the application to have tribal gaming is based solely on race. No other race of people is allowed this type of favoritism. It is because of these things, in addition to the fact that we believe gambling is morally wrong, that we went to Washington. We also learned that HB 4893, which will eliminate reservation shopping, should be coming up again in the next House session in November. Contact your legislators to support this bill. We are thankful for a safe trip and for the opportunity to express our concerns to our leaders in Washington. Section 3 below was updated as a result of our trip.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

1. First things first: Pray without ceasing. Our God answers prayer.
2. Call, email, and snail mail your state reps and senators, and ask them to oppose the bingo-like raffle games at the HoChunk Soccer complex and the application of the HoChunk Nation to have the land in Lynwood placed into federal trust for the purpose of gambling. If the land is put into trust, Cook County property taxes will go up (the HoChunk currently pay close to \$1 million in property taxes a year. If that land is taken off the tax rolls and put it into trust, where is that \$1 million going to come from? Your pockets and mine!) Also, ask why [www.cookcountytreasurer.com](http://www.cookcountytreasurer.com) shows the 2nd installment as of 10/20/2006 is still delinquent - approximately \$474,918.00 if you include taxes, interest and penalties.

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3. Write and ask Terrence Virden to be placed on the “interested parties” list regarding the HoChunk Nation trust application in Lynwood, Illinois. He is the person that must file the final application required for the HoChunk nation to eventually have their land placed into federal trust. (We suggest also mailing a copy to George Skibine.) This will allow you to receive any information regarding public meetings, progress of the application, and reports that come out regarding the application. Be sure to express opposition to putting any property in Illinois in federal trust for the purpose of gambling.

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4. If you can, please consider a donation to C4C. Although donations are not deductible for income tax purposes, they do help cover our existing phone expenses, insurance and legal fees, newsletter costs, etc. We especially appreciate the letters, words of encouragement, prayers and gifts that have been sent to us.

The C4C Executive Committee