

GOOD MORNING.
THANK YOU CHAIRMAN JAMES.
THANK YOU COMMISSION MEMBERS FOR ALLOWING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO
BE HERE TODAY.

I AM VIVIAN BURDETTE, TRIBAL CHAIRPERSON FOR THE TONTO APACHE TRIBE
IN PAYSON, ARIZONA.

THE TONTO APACHE TRIBE WAS FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED IN 1972 WITH 85
ACRES OF LAND WE BEGAN CALLING HOME. WHAT MATTERED TO OUR
PEOPLE WAS THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARING OUR RESOURCES AND LENDING
A HELPING HAND TO ONE ANOTHER. WE WORSHIPED IN A SMALL, ONE LIGHT
BULB CHURCH. HERE WE GATHERED TO STRENGTHEN OUR FAITH. OUR
NEEDS WERE SIMPLE AND WE ACCEPTED A WAY OF LIFE THAT EXISTED ON
RESERVATIONS THROUGHOUT CENTRAL ARIZONA. UNEMPLOYMENT WAS
HIGH, EDUCATION WAS LOW AND MEDICAL FACILITIES WERE FAR. THE
FEDERAL NEGLECT OF INDIAN NATIONS WAS EXTREMELY EVIDENT. FUNDING
FOR BADLY NEEDED PROJECTS ON RESERVATIONS WAS SCARCE AND
DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN. STILL WE REMAINED STRONG, DETERMINED AND
CONCERNED, HELD TOGETHER BY OUR FAMILIES AND OUR FAITH.

I AM HERE TODAY BECAUSE I BELIEVE IN THE SELF -SUFFICIENCY OF INDIAN
NATIONS. TRIBAL GOVERNMENT GAMING HAS PROVIDED A MEANS TO SELF-
SUFFICIENCY. IT HAS CREATED JOBS ON THE RESERVATION, AND
INDIRECTLY CREATED JOBS IN THE COMMUNITY AND HAS INCREASED
REVENUE AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY THROUGHOUT THE STATE. TRIBAL
GOVERNMENT GAMING SERVES THE SAME PURPOSE, AND SHOULD BE
VIEWED IN THE SAME MANNER AS THE STATE LOTTERY OR PARI-MUTUAL
WAGERING.

ON THE TONTO APACHE RESERVATION:

THE MAZATZAL CASINO CURRENTLY EMPLOYS 267 NON TRIBAL MEMBERS.
THE CURRENT UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ON THE OUR RESERVATION IS LESS
THAN 5% COMPARED TO 70% IN 1992.

DUE TO THE INCREASE IN EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES, THE OVERALL CRIME
RATE FOR PAYSON HAS DROPPED 3%.

THE MAZATZAL CASINO UTILIZES LOCAL BUSINESSES, THUS HELPING
SUSTAIN THEM DURING THE SLOW WINTER MONTHS.

MEDICAL INSURANCE HAS BEEN PROVIDED FOR 161 NON TRIBAL FAMILIES
AND ALL TONTO APACHE TRIBAL MEMBERS.

THE ELDERLY ARE PROVIDED WITH DAILY MEALS.

THERE IS A YOUTH WORK PROGRAM, DAYCARE, PLAYGROUND, EDUCATION
FUND, AND A GYMNASIUM ON OUR RESERVATION.

WE HAVE A TRIBAL SOCIAL WORKER, A TRIBAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE
COUNSELOR, AND A COUNSELOR EMPLOYED BY THE CASINO ON THE
PREMISES.

THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE ECONOMIC GOALS WHICH THE TONTO APACHE TRIBE HAS ACCOMPLISHED FROM THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF INDIAN GAMING. WE ARE NO LONGER DEPENDENT ON THE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE FOR OUR PEOPLE. OUR DREAM OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY IS BECOMING A REALITY, AND WE ARE THANKFUL FOR THE PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE. WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE FUTURE WHICH INDIAN GAMING CAN PROVIDE FOR US.

AS ALWAYS, THERE ARE THOSE WHO LOOK FOR, AND DWELL ON, THE DOWNSIDE OF ANY SITUATION. ADMITTEDLY, THERE CAN BE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS FORM OF INDUSTRY. GAMBLING ADDICTION IS OBVIOUSLY AN ISSUE. HOWEVER, ADDICTION COMES IN MANY FORMS. ANY FORM OF ADDICTION IS ALWAYS A CONCERN IN ANY COMMUNITY. UNFORTUNATELY, WE CANNOT REMOVE ALL OF THE ADDICTIVE ELEMENTS PRESENT IN OUR DAILY LIVES. ELIMINATING INDIAN GAMING IN ARIZONA WOULD NOT REMOVE THE ADDICTION OF GAMBLING.

WE DO FEEL THAT THE RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO SUFFICIENTLY DEAL WITH THE ISSUES THAT CAN ARISE. COUNSELING IS AVAILABLE FOR TRIBAL MEMBERS AND THE NUMBER FOR GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS IS POSTED THROUGHOUT THE CASINO. UNFORTUNATELY, THE LOCAL CHAPTER OF GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS HAS DISSOLVED **DUE TO LACK OF PARTICIPANTS**. PERSONS ADMITTING A PROBLEM WITH GAMBLING CAN BE BARRED FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT UPON REQUEST, AND ARE REFERRED TO ASSOCIATIONS WHICH CAN ASSIST THEM WITH THEIR PROBLEMS. WE URGE PEOPLE TO GAMBLE RESPONSIBLY.

A CLOSE WATCH IS KEPT ON THE TRIBAL COMMUNITY. BASED ON THE INFORMATION FROM THE TRIBAL SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT: THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN ALCOHOL RELATED INCIDENTS ON THE RESERVATION AS A RESULT OF GAMING. SUBSTANCE ABUSE IS LIMITED TO A FEW PERSONS AND IS NOT A RESULT OF GAMING. THE CRIME RATE AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY RATE IS AT ITS LOWEST.

INDIAN GAMING HAS MADE A POSITIVE IMPACT IN OUR LIVES, IN THIS COMMUNITY, AND IN THE STATE. WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN A DEFINITE SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT AND SECURITY. WE HAVE SOMETHING TO STRIVE FOR TO GROW WITH, TO IMPROVE, AND MOST OF ALL SOMETHING TO PASS ON TO OUR YOUTH. WE WILL BE PASSING ON A NEW AND IMPROVED WAY OF LIFE CONSISTING OF HIGHER STANDARDS, HIGHER EDUCATION AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

AGAIN, THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THE VIEWS OF THE TONTO APACHE TRIBE ON THIS ISSUE.