

House Bill 2534 and Senate Bill 1136: PACHyderm Coalition opposes unlimited casino gambling

by Don Goldwater

PACHyderm Coalition

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The PACHyderm Coalition has been a consistent opponent of unlimited casino gambling in our state and a consistent advocate for private property rights. We want to make it abundantly clear that we have not and will not waver from those fundamental positions, regardless of outside influences within or without the Party. In this case, a red herring has been inserted into the argument trying to bridge a gulf too wide by connecting these two issues as if one conflicts with the other.

House Bill 2534 and Senate Bill 1136 are clearly structured to support the above positions. The argument that passage of these bills will somehow reduce private property rights is simply false. These Bills consist of five simple sentences written in unambiguous, layman language. Let's go to the core of the issue by looking at the specific language:

A. Notwithstanding any other provision of this article:

1. A city or town located in a county with a population of more than three hundred fifty thousand persons may annex any territory within an area that is surrounded by the city or town or that is bordered by the city or town on at least three sides if the landowner has submitted a request to the federal government to take ownership of the territory or hold the territory in trust.
2. The annexation of territory pursuant to this section is valid if approved by a majority vote of the governing body of the city or town. The annexation becomes immediately operative if it is approved by at least two-thirds of the governing body of the city or town.

B. For the purposes of this section, "submitted a request to the federal government" means the landowner has made an application to the federal government as required by a specific federal statute or regulation.

Unfortunately, the position taken by Rep. Farnsworth goes against states rights and Arizona's right to self determination and supports federal supremacy (Department of Interior) that have chosen to subvert the will of Arizonans who approved Prop. 202 in 2002 and to subvert the Gila River Land Replacement Act signed President Ronald Reagan.

The property rights this bill addresses are special rights that are not available to any other property owner in our state. None of us can convert private land into a sovereign nation and then build a casino in violation of the IGRA and the Gila River Replacement Act. The foundation of these acts go specifically to preventing the placement of Las Vegas style Casino gambling within a city. Of utmost importance is the fact that twenty three tribes signed the Indian Gaming Compact and only one tribe has used surreptitious means to violate the rules they gave their oath to support.

If the Tohono O'Odham Tribe is successful in their action to violate the Compact, you can be sure that Las Vegas style gaming casinos will appear down the street from a school near you, thanks to future actions by one of the other 22 tribes that up-to-now have honored the Compact, but will feel justified in following the above unlawful actions.

The PACHyderm Coalition strongly urges you to contact your state senator and state representatives and respectfully advocate for their support for this important legislation. If you do not know the direct line for your legislator, you can call the Capitol Switchboard, 602-926-5999, and ask for them by name. The e-mail address uses the following format: the initial of their first name followed by their last name followed by @azleg.gov.