



Rebuilding  
Communities  
Through Indian  
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# Media Release

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Contact: Deana Jackson  
(202) 579-5427  
djackson@indiangaming.org

### **NATIONAL INDIAN GAMING ASSOCIATION JOINS MINNESOTA INDIAN GAMING RALLY AT THE STATE CAPITOL**

**St. Paul Minn. – April 27, 2011** - National Indian Gaming Association Chairman Ernie Stevens, Jr. joined an estimated 3,000 tribal employees, tribal members and supporters at the Minnesota State Capitol mall yesterday as they shared their concerns about the potential for loss of vital tribal jobs of the state legislature authorizes slot machines at licensed racetracks in Minnesota.

The “Don’t Gamble with Our Jobs” rally organized by the Minnesota Indian Gaming Association (MIGA) included participants from every reservation in Minnesota, as well as urban and rural communities across the state. According to the MIGA, more than 55 buses lined the streets near the capitol building as the event got underway.

NIGA Vice Chairman Kevin Leecy, who is also Chairman of the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa of Minnesota said the tribes felt it was important to show legislators how many people are worried about losing their jobs to a state-sponsored initiative.

Addressing the rally, Chairman Stevens said, “Tribal governments are giving back to America more than anyone could have ever imagined. The reality of our \$26 billion a year industry has been phenomenal when you compare it to the \$11 billion dollar industry of just a decade ago.”

“We have experienced substantial growth and its not just Indian Country that’s reaping the benefits. Some 500,000 jobs are now available to Indians and non-Indians alike.”

Stevens added, “The United States reaps \$9 billion in taxes from Indian gaming employees and those businesses that do business with gaming tribes and States

receive over \$3 billion in state sales income taxes, revenue sharing and regulatory payments."

"Without a doubt, Indian Country is doing our part to be part of the economic solution for America."

The racino bill currently under consideration places no limit on the number of licensed racetracks in Minnesota that could become racinos. A hearing on the House racino bill was set for yesterday, but postponed due to the illness of the committee chairman.

It is expected that tribal representatives will testify as House and Senate versions of various expansion bills work their way through the legislative process in coming weeks.

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**About the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA)** - The National Indian Gaming Association is a nonprofit trade association comprised of 184 American Indian Nations and other nonvoting associate member. The mission of NIGA is to advance the lives of Indian people – economically, socially and politically. NIGA operates as a clearinghouse and educational legislative and public policy resources for tribes, policymakers and the public on Indian gaming issues and tribal community development. For more information, visit [www.indiangaming.org](http://www.indiangaming.org).