



LETTER: MichGO resorts to dishonesty

Saturday, May 25, 202007

Todd Boorsma's Michigan Gambling Opposition (MichGO) letter last week ("What if?' scenarios get in way of facts," Mar. 21) was yet another shameful display of dishonesty. He used a classic MichGO tactic. Lie about the casino and lie about the gaming compact.

Just like MichGO did last month in the Grand Rapids Press, Boorsma's letter intentionally and wrongly claimed the Gun Lake Tribe would stop paying the local governments if Peter Secchia opens his casino in Grand Rapids. This is not true and they know it. By the way, do you think the Secchia Casino idea was orchestrated with MichGO?

The Tribe would not stop "the million dollar payments to local communities" if another casino opens in Grand Rapids. The Tribe would have the right to stop its payments to the State (8 percent to 12 percent) but the payments to the locals (2 percent) are guaranteed for the term of the compact. The state payments and local payments are separate issues entirely.

The 2 percent funds, guaranteed to the locals if the legislature approves the compact, are in no way tied to the exclusivity clause. In fact, all the tribes operating casinos in Michigan continue to make 2 percent local payments. This is easily verified at the Michigan Gaming Control Board Web site www.michigan.gov/mgcb.

Boorsma's lie about local revenue sharing is similar to another one he told WOOD TV 8 two months ago: that the Gun Lake Casino compact will cause tribal payments from other casinos around the state to cease. That one was corrected directly by Governor Granholm's office.

When will the West Michigan media learn the lesson? MichGO's word is worthless. Perhaps the media doesn't care?

The name itself "Michigan Gambling Opposition" is baseless and untrue. Everyone knows MichGO has not spoken a word in opposition to horse racing casinos, lottery expansion through placement of electronic machines in bars and restaurants, bingo in churches, and other commercial and tribal casino proposals around southern Michigan.

MichGO's Web site states that the group was formed in November 2000; the same time the anti-Gun Lake group assaulted our tribal members with hate speech and racial epithets at the Wayland gymnasium.

The formation of MichGO also just happened to occur a short time after the Blue Chip riverboat casino hired its former owner, Kevin Flynn, to stop our casino and two other Indian casinos. Of course Boorsma knows all about this story because he worked with Blue Chip's consultants in Lansing and Grand Rapids. Perhaps MichGO is paying its bills with casino money.

For self-proclaimed moral and religious advocates, MichGO does not seem to practice what they preach. Telling lies and using hate speech and racial slurs to advance its agenda has not gained MichGO the moral high ground.

It is MichGO that is untrustworthy. It is MichGO that has delayed the inevitable creation of thousands of good jobs with benefits and millions of tribal revenue sharing dollars from flowing to our local communities. Tribal revenue sharing dollars will be given to local governments in Allegan County, even if MichGO's heroes from Grand Rapids get what they've always wanted their own casino.

Jason M. Palmer,

Gun Lake Tribe Director of Development

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