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Chairman, Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
Oversight Hearing On The
Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 (IGRA)

May 14, 2003

Good morning and welcome to the first in a series of Oversight Hearings on the *Indian Gaming Regulatory Act*.

In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its decision in the now-famous *Cabazon* case and held that the State of California did not have jurisdiction over the tribe's gaming activities.

Tribal authority to conduct gaming on their own lands was upheld by the Court.

State Governors scrambled for Congress' help and they got it: IGRA was enacted in 1988 over the objection of most Indian tribes.

The Indian tribes did not request that IGRA be enacted — they acquiesced in its enactment.

In enacting the IGRA, Congress took part of Indian tribal sovereignty away.

The growth of Indian gaming has been nothing less than astounding.

In 1988, tribal gaming produced \$100 million.

Revenues now stand at \$13 billion and Indian gaming continues to provide revenue to tribes and jobs to their members in unprecedented numbers.

There are now 300 Indian gaming operations in the U.S. and I am informed once again by the National Indian Gaming Commission that the growth of the industry is out-pacing its ability to fulfill its functions under the IGRA.

Today we will hear from the NIGC and from the National Indian Gaming Association on 2 issues:

1. the contours of NIGC's statutory role; and
2. whether the resources available to the NIGC are sufficient to enable it to do its job.

With that, I look forward to hearing from our two witnesses this morning.