

Statement of Ben Nighthorse Campbell
Chairman, Committee on Indian Affairs
Oversight Hearing
On the Report of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission

June 23, 1999

Good morning. The Committee will come to order. This morning the Committee will receive testimony on the Final Report released to the public on June 18, 1999, by the National Gambling Impact Study Commission.

This Commission was created in 1996 by Congress and conducted a series of hearings on issues related to gambling in the United States. The Commission was charged with studying the social and economic impacts of state lotteries, casinos, pari-mutuel betting, Indian gaming, and other forms of gambling.

After a series of hearings, the Commission has submitted this Report together with its recommendations on how to address what it sees as problems associated with the gambling industry.

Indian gaming, as we know, has grown substantially since the enactment in 1988 of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) to where today it generates \$6.7 billion dollars annually for those tribes that have gaming operations and provides them with the desperately needed economic development opportunities that have been lacking in Indian Country.

However, most people do not know that the majority of tribes in the U.S., nearly 2/3 of all tribes, do NOT operate any gaming. The benefits from Indian gaming have not been felt by all Native communities and it continues to be the business of this Committee to assist tribes in the development of other economic opportunities .

We will hear about a number of issues today including the regulatory structure of Indian

gaming; whether labor laws should apply to these activities; resolving state-tribal impasses over gaming negotiations; Internet gaming; and a host of others.

Earlier this year I introduced legislation that will do 3 things:

1. Provide Indian gaming with the kind of universal, minimum standards it needs;
2. Ensure the National Indian Gaming Commission has the appropriate amount of resources to enable it to do its job; and
3. Assist states and tribes to resolve their differences over class III gaming compacts.

Each of these proposals is been supported by the findings and recommendations of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission.

I remain hopeful that we can get these reasonable measures enacted this session, and welcome constructive criticisms of these bills. With that, I look forward to hearing from our witnesses on this important matter.