

Bay Area. The resolutions are regarding the planned casino in my congressional district. The communities surrounding the proposed site are doing all they can to ensure that their voices are heard on this controversial issue and it is extremely important that all sides of the issue are given a platform to do so. I hope that H.R. 2656 is brought before the House for a vote in the near future.

RESOLUTION No. 2003-220 N.C.S.

Whereas, the Petaluma City Council respects the rights of Native Americans to establish and have recognized tribal sovereignty, and to secure lands under their jurisdiction; and,

Whereas, under the existing federal legislative requirements, there is no provision for coordination of gaming proposals or associated major tribal enterprises with established and approved off-reservation local or regional planning law and General Plans in any timely and meaningful way; and,

Whereas, developments of great magnitude are being proposed which are dependent upon local and regional public infrastructure, including highways, streets, transit systems, water, wastewater and energy systems and resources, affordable housing, and emergency services, both built and yet to be built; and,

Whereas, without appropriate mitigation, the developments proposed are very likely to have substantial negative impacts and place substantial burdens on the public infrastructure with a substantial burden falling upon existing and future taxpayers, residents, visitors and businesses; and,

Whereas, with the rapid construction of tribal gaming facilities, local governments are experiencing serious, adverse impacts related to off-reservation economic, environmental, health and safety issues; and,

Whereas, the current conditions placed on Indian gaming to achieve and preserve the environmental, public safety, and public health objectives of both state and local government have been insufficient to prevent such adverse impacts; and,

Whereas, when California voters approved Proposition 1A (Indian Gaming) in March of 2004 as a means of supporting the laudable goal of Indian economic development and self-sufficiency, they were not aware that such approval would allow Nevada developers to seize prized off-reservation environmental resources for intense development without regard to locally approved general plans or any meaningful environmental review or protection; and,

Whereas, under the provisions of Proposition 1A and the Tribal-State Compact, local communities have not been granted effective input into the development of proposed tribal casinos that threaten their rights and the State appears to have no effective redress for significant environmental impacts these gambling casinos impose on local communities; and,

Whereas, on February 6, 2003, the California State Association of Counties has adopted a policy document that includes seven principles of critical concern to counties, including a principle that tribes and local governments enter into binding and enforceable local agreements for the mitigation of off-reservation impacts that arise from a local gaming project; and,

Whereas, approximately 360 acres of prime agricultural lands west of Rohnert Park are presently in imminent danger of being withdrawn from County land use control and placed into trust for the purposes of casino development—including an extensive gaming complex, with a 300 room hotel, spas, restaurants, a 2000 seat entertainment venue, parking and other support services, by Sta-

tion Casinos, a Las Vegas-based developer and the Federated Indians of the Graton Rancheria (Graton Tribe); and,

Whereas, Station Casino and the Graton Tribe's gaming proposal will have substantial negative impacts upon the federal highway system (US Highway 101), upon which it is dependent for bringing its customers into and out of the region; on local and regional roads; to the Santa Rosa Plain groundwater aquifer, to water quality, along with unknown local and regional fiscal impacts; and,

Whereas, the proposed Graton Tribe casino site is proposed on property whose zoning is inconsistent with the Sonoma County General Plan (on prime agricultural land, in the community separators and outside Rohnert Park's Urban Growth Boundary), within the Laguna de Santa Rosa's flood plain and within critical wetland habitat for several federally endangered species; and,

Whereas, the proposed Graton Tribe casino proposal is not subject to a thorough CEQA-like process that identifies fiscal and environmental impacts then to be mitigated by the Graton Tribe, nor is administrative consideration by the Department of the Interior required to determine if the use of this land, sought for gaming, will have significant detrimental impacts on the neighboring communities which outweigh the benefits to the tribe; and,

Whereas, the Graton Tribe was restored in 2000 based, in part, on its promise not to engage its Indian casino gaming; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Petaluma City Council strongly supports the revisions in federal legislation [HR 2656/S1342] introduced by Representative Woolsey and Senator Feinstein. The Petaluma City Council also urges all members of the Senate and House of Representatives to support these important statutory changes and immediately move for their passage; and be it further

Resolved, That the Petaluma City Council supports the California State Association of Counties policy document regarding compact negotiations for Indian Gaming; and requests that the Graton Tribe follow the principles contained therein; and be it further

Resolved, That the Petaluma City Council, based on the information currently available, strongly opposes the creation of a gambling casino resort on any site that is inconsistent with the local land use planning and zoning policies; and be it further

Resolved, That the Petaluma City Council calls on the Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma, in all negotiations with the Tribe concerning creation of a gambling casino resort, to safeguard the vital and legitimate interests of all Sonoma County citizens by requiring that the following minimum standards be included in a binding, legally-enforceable Memorandum of Understanding with the Tribe:

1. The proposed casino/resort project must be subject, at a minimum, to the same level of environmental review as would be required by the pending Federal legislation; and

2. The proposed casino/resort project must be subject to the principles of the California State Association of Counties policy document regarding compact negotiations for Indian Gaming; and

3. Even though the pending federal legislation does not require environmental mitigation, in order to ensure that the citizens of Sonoma County do not bear the costs associated with the impacts of the casino/resort, the Tribe must agree to mitigate, and must in fact mitigate, all environmental impacts caused by its project; and

4. In order to prevent Sonoma County citizens from having land within their jurisdiction exempted from local land use control by

reason of future acquisition by the Graton Tribe, the Tribe must agree that it will take NO OTHER LAND anywhere in Sonoma County or in any adjacent county into tribal trust NOW OR IN THE FUTURE.

5. The proposed casino/resort project must be subject, at a minimum, to the same level of public safety review and enforcement as would a private developer.

HELP PARENTS GET REAL JOBS,
REAL WAGES, AND REAL SUCCESS

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 20, 2003

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill, the Business Links Act of 2003, that would provide needed resources to parents facing serious barriers to employment. The bill would provide grants for transitional jobs programs in order to support State efforts to help TANF recipients find work. Transitional jobs can provide the right combination of support, work, and vocational training and have the potential to turn many job seekers into permanent wage earners.

I would like to thank my colleagues who have joined me as original cosponsors on this bill. I would also like to commend Senator JEFF BINGAMAN who has already introduced companion legislation, S. 786, in the Senate.

This legislation would replace the TANF bonus grants currently provided to States and instead provide \$200 million for each of fiscal years 2005 through 2009 for grants to be awarded to nonprofit organizations, local workforce investment boards, States, localities, and Indian tribes. The grant funds could be used either to promote business links by improving employee wages and job skills in partnership with employers or to provide fully subsidized wage-paying jobs to individuals who have been unemployed because of limited skills or other barriers. The legislation also includes worker protection provisions that, among other things, prohibit transitional job participants from displacing or replacing existing workers or positions and provide participants the same worker protections that all other workers receive. Parents who are currently receiving or have recently received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), parents who are at risk of needing TANF, individuals with disabilities, and unemployed, noncustodial parents who are having difficulty meeting their child support obligations would be eligible to participate in transitional jobs programs.

Transitional jobs programs would provide intensive case management and access to needed support services such as vocational skills training, basic education, job placement services, and child care to all participants. Transitional jobs programs, which are aimed at helping those who have limited English proficiency and other barriers to employment, can be particularly effective for the hardest to serve welfare recipients. Program participants must work 30 to 40 hours a week, unless they have a child under the age of six, and participation is time limited to between six and 24 months. The goal of transitional jobs programs is to prepare and help participants find unsubsidized, permanent jobs. Because of the individual attention given to each transitional job holder, various programs across the country

have proven very successful in achieving that goal. From January 2000 to July 2001, a Chicago program known as Transitional Community Service Jobs placed over 75 percent of its participants in unsubsidized jobs, more than one-third of which paid over \$8.00 an hour.

Many cities and communities across the country have implemented transitional jobs programs because they understand the importance of helping those facing serious barriers to employment, and they recognize the long-term benefits of investing in a future workforce that is well-trained and able to contribute to the economy. However, because the Welfare-to-Work funds that help support transitional jobs programs are nearly exhausted and because of tight State budgets, many of those successful programs are at risk. This bill would provide a more stable funding source to allow many of these programs to survive, enable the development of new programs, and require a rigorous evaluation of funded programs.

I am proud that this bill would help those who are having a difficult time supporting their children by providing them with resources and skills that will help them immediately, as well as sustain them in the future. I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring the Business Links Act of 2003.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP OF UNIFIED BUDDHIST CHURCH OF VIETNAM

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am here today as a staunch supporter of freedom of religion. While we have made progress in our own country, there are other areas in the world which still persecute unjustly. Buddhism has a 2,000-year tradition in Vietnam and the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV) is an heir to this tradition. In 1981, the Government of Vietnam declared the UBCV, one of the largest religious denominations in the country, illegal, confiscated its temples, and persecuted its clergy for refusing to join the state-sponsored Buddhist organizations.

The Government of Vietnam has often imprisoned UBCV clergy and subjected them to other forms of persecution; the Patriarch of the UBCV, the 85-year-old Most Venerable Thich Huyen Quang, has been detained and restrained for more than 2 decades in isolated areas of Vietnam. The Vietnamese Government has held the Most Venerable Thich Quang Do, the Executive President of the UBCV and his deputy, the Venerable Thich Tue Sy, in various forms of detention since 1977. In 1978, he was tortured to death in a reeducation camp.

Many other leading UBCV figures have been detained and harassed. Evading tight surveillance, others have fled to Cambodia to escape religious repression and harassment.

Vietnam has acceded to international treaties that prohibit the forced repatriation of UNHCR-recognized refugees and that protect the right to faith, belief, and practice.

Vietnam's constitution protects the right of religious belief, yet on October 8, 2003, Vietnamese authorities initiated a tense standoff following the meeting, where police stopped a vehicle carrying the UBCV's new leadership and subsequently detained the eleven passengers. According to reports by the United States State Department, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, and the European Union, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam systematically limits the right of religious organizations to choose their own clergy.

During the 107th Congress, I along with my colleagues in the House of Representatives, passed H.R. 2833, the Vietnam Human Rights Act, on September 6, 2001, which noted the persecutions faced by various members of the UBCV over the past 25 years. Because of systematic, egregious, and ongoing abuses of religious freedom, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom recommended that the President of the United States designate Vietnam as a "country of particular concern" under the provisions of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.

Today, I am pleased to join the House of Representatives in congratulating the new leadership of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam and urging the Government of Vietnam to respect the right of all independent religious organizations to meet, worship, operate, and practice their faith in accordance with Vietnam's own constitution and international covenants to which Vietnam is a signatory.

We are joined by our allies in being committed to promoting religious freedom in Vietnam, and, in furtherance of this goal, and urge the implementation of the recommendations of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

We ask that the United States Embassy in Vietnam to closely monitor cases of abuse of religious belief and practice, routinely visit detained clergy members, especially those in need of medical care, and report to the Congress on specific measures taken to protect and promote religious freedom in Vietnam.

HONORING SEEDS OF PEACE FOR ITS PROMOTION OF UNDERSTANDING AMONG YOUTH FROM REGIONS OF CONFLICT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today to honor such a valuable program. Seeds of Peace was founded by John Wallach in 1993. It is a program designed to bring together young people from regions of conflict to study and learn about coexistence and conflict resolution.

The original focus of Seeds of Peace was to bring Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian, and Egyptian youth together, the program has since expanded to involve youths from other regions of conflict, including Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, the Balkans, India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

Seeds of Peace provides young people with the opportunity to study, learn and interact at a summer camp in Otisfield, Maine, and also through regional programs at the Jerusalem

Center for Coexistence. Seeds of Peace works to dispel fear, mistrust, and prejudice, which are root causes of violence and conflict, and to build a new generation of leaders who are committed to achieving peace.

Seeds of Peace has been successful at revealing the human face of those whom youth have been taught to hate, by engaging campers in both guided coexistence sessions and ordinary summer camp activities such as living together in cabins, sharing meals, canoeing, swimming, playing sports, and creative exploration through arts and computers.

The Arab-Israeli conflict is currently at a critical juncture, and sustained progress towards peace depends on the emergence of a new generation of leaders who will choose dialogue, friendship, and openness over violence and hatred.

In addition to Seeds of Peace, I am a co-sponsor of Global Family Day, a House Resolution that seeks to raise awareness of children by having a one day holiday every year dedicated to family, community and sharing global traditions.

Similar to Global Family Day, Seeds of Peace provides year-round opportunities for former participants to build on the relationships they have forged at camp, so that the learning processes begun at camp can continue back in the participants' home countries, where they are most needed.

Programs such as these bring us closer to our foreign policy goals of raising our future leaders to think about global issues, and see the neighbors as other children like them, rather than enemies.

Both Global Family Day and Seeds of Peace are strongly supported by participating governments and many world leaders. It is especially important to reaffirm that youth must be involved in long-term, visionary solutions to conflicts perpetuated by cycles of violence. I am glad we have the opportunity to honor Seeds of Peace, for the work it has accomplished thus far, and for the impact it will have for generations.

COMMENDING AFGHAN WOMEN FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION IN AFGHAN GOVERNMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today to support H. Res. 393, commending Afghan women for their participation in Afghan government and civil society, encouraging the inclusion of Afghan women in the political and economic life of Afghanistan, and advocating the protection of the human rights of all Afghan women in their Constitution.

As we are all aware, the women of Afghanistan suffered horrible tragedies under the Taliban regime. The Afghan people have since rejected the Taliban and are in the process of building a free and democratic republic and repairing the damage. These efforts have improved the daily lives of all Afghan citizens,