COQUILLE INDIAN TRIBE

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Tribe to Lottery: Explore A Little Fairness

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The Coquille Indian Tribe called on the Oregon Lottery today to withdraw its "Lewis and Clark" advertising campaign, describing the ads as insulting and hypocritical.

"The ads are supposed to be funny, but they drive home the reality that Oregon's political leaders don't want to share economic opportunity with Indian people," Coquille Chairperson Brenda Meade said.

In a letter to Lottery Director Jack Roberts, Meade noted that the ads show the famed explorers discovering "native" video Lottery terminals amid Oregon's natural splendor – but no native people. This "land without Indians" highlights the state's attitude toward tribal gaming, she said.

"I'm not saying they should put Indians in the ads," Meade said. "I'm saying the state should end the hypocrisy of opposing tribal gaming opportunities while promoting its own booming Lottery business."

Gov. Kate Brown said last week she intends to 'hold the line' on Indian gaming in Oregon. Meanwhile the state-run Lottery is installing new video terminals and experiencing the third-highest growth rate in the country.

"Double standards are nothing new to Indian people, but that doesn't make them right," Meade said.

The Coquille Tribe has proposed a Class II casino in Medford, which lies within the Tribe's congressionally established five-county service area. Unlike a full-scale Class III casino, a Class II establishment offers only video terminals, similar to Lottery machines. The casino, dubbed The Cedars at Bear Creek, would help the Tribe provide services to its growing membership, including education, health care, and meals for senior citizens. The Cedars is awaiting approval by the U.S. Interior Department's Bureau of Indian Affairs.

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