



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

NEWS RELEASE

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STATE SUES COEUR D'ALENE TRIBE OVER POKER AT TRIBAL CASINO

(BOISE) – Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter and Attorney General Lawrence Wasden filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court today to stop the Coeur d'Alene Tribe from offering poker at its northern Idaho casino in violation of the Idaho Constitution and the tribe's gaming compact with the State.

The tribe planned to begin offering Texas Hold 'Em and Omaha poker today at the casino south of Coeur d'Alene.

Under the federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), Indian tribes are authorized only to offer those types of games that are legal within the state where they are operating. The Idaho Constitution prohibits poker, classified under IGRA as a Class III game. That restriction is detailed in the Coeur d'Alene Tribe's gaming compact with the State, which is required for operation of a tribal casino under IGRA.

"Article III Section 20 of the Idaho Constitution is clear, and it's my duty to enforce and defend the Constitution and the laws of Idaho," Governor Otter said. "Despite discussions with tribal leaders and our best efforts at avoiding this situation, we have no choice but to act. I will continue working with the Attorney General to uphold our laws and resolve this issue."

Attorney General Wasden said he will lead the legal challenge.

"I back Governor Otter and share his belief that the state-tribal compact negotiated more than 20 years ago clearly prohibits any kind of poker," Wasden said. "My job now is to vigorously litigate this case and ensure the tribe complies with the provisions of the compact."

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