

Senecas Propose Direct Payments to Host Communities - WNED

Written by Administrator
Friday, 08 October 2010 17:34 -

The Seneca Nation of Indians has come up with a plan designed to help host communities while the Senecas try to resolve a dispute with Albany over the Casino Compact. The Senecas stopped giving Albany its share of casino revenue two years ago because they claim the state is running slot machines at local horse racing tracks. The Nation's Senior Counsel Robert 'Odawi' Porter says the Compact gives the Senecas exclusive slot machine rights in Western New York.

Host communities are supposed to get 25-percent of the state's share of Casino Revenue. Until the dispute is resolved, Porter says the Senecas want Governor David Paterson to let them make payments directly to cities such as Buffalo and Niagara Falls.

"We want to be able to pay the local governments so that they are not harmed by what is going on in Albany and that if we do so, we want to make sure that the Nation is not harmed by later on being held to a 100% payment," said Porter.

Porter says the dispute is not related to Paterson's attempt to collect taxes on cigarettes sold by Indian retailers. He says the Senecas notified the Governor's Office in January about the dispute but it took nine months to get a response.

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