



Indians of Enterprise No. 1

Robert Edwards, Chairman

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Mr. Steve Haze, Haze for Congress Committee
P.O. Box 707
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Dear Steve,

My tribe was very pleased when you announced your candidacy to represent the 20th Congressional District in the San Joaquin Valley, as a Democrat, for the U.S. House of Representatives. We have come to know you as a man of your word, a trait that appears to be in short supply in politics these days. We believe you will truly make a difference, not only for your constituents, but for our country and our people as well.


As you know, up until 2003, I was the former Vice Chair of the Enterprise Rancheria tribe in Butte County. While performing my duties for the tribe, I discovered a discrepancy within our Human Services Fund for needy tribal members. Upon more thorough examination it became very clear that five members of our seven member Tribal Council had hit that fund for thousands and thousands of dollars. The result of this breach by tribal govt. was a petition and scheduled recall election targeting the five tribal officials.

Seven days before the recall election the 72 tribal members, including myself, who had signed that recall petition, were suspended from the Enterprise Rancheria tribe pending disenrollment proceedings. We were denied every civil right known to most Americans such as the right to vote; the right to speak and the right to due process.

Thousands of California Indians have no voice, no civil rights, and have been denied membership in their own tribes. Many gaming tribes simply rid themselves of tribal members in order not to share gaming profits with their people. Other tribes simply deny their people the right to belong or tribal government changes their status within the tribe to deny them benefits. Those same tribes conduct a "renegade" form of government and members have no recourse. Problems such as these have been swept under the rug by politicians in California who are being well funded by wealthy gaming tribes.

You drafted and supported the California Native American Justice and Equal Economic Opportunity Legislative Initiative resolution in order to make a difference for thousands of victimized California Indians. Native Americans are entitled to the same civil rights protections afforded other Americans. The only way there can be change in this area is by due diligence on our part in supporting those political figures who believe as we do and who show exceptional leadership qualities. We believe you are such a leader and we are encouraging other California Indians to support your candidacy as well.

Sincerely,


Robert Edwards, Chairman

