



*Opponents of the proposed Cowlitz casino were victorious Wednesday (Feb. 1), from Washington state to Washington, D.C.—and made national news!*

### **La Center speaks out**

On Wednesday, the La Center City Council turned back a full-force effort by the Cowlitz Tribe and its D.C., Seattle and Vancouver attorneys to convince the city that:

1. La Center should just live with the restored lands opinion issued in November by the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) that marginalizes local and state participation in deciding whether a casino should be sited at the Interstate 5–La Center interchange; and
2. the city should accept the Cowlitz Tribe’s offer to compensate it for some revenue that could be lost from its cardrooms for up to 10 years. The draft agreement would require the city to spend the money on improvement projects decided jointly with the tribe.

The City Council responded by voting 3-2 to ask Interior Secretary Gale Norton to set aside the NIGC’s restored lands opinion.

Read the story in *The Columbian*: [La Center council wants feds to set aside Cowlitz opinion](#)

### **U.S. Senate Committee discusses Cowlitz situation**

In Washington, D.C., on Wednesday Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) told NIGC counsel Penny Coleman that “communities, local governments and other tribes affected by the Cowlitz proposal seem to have been caught completely off guard” by the NIGC restored lands opinion. He asked her, “What’s going on here?”

Addressing the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Coleman called the manner in which the Cowlitz Tribe had applied—by tying the restored lands application to the time-sensitive gaming ordinance—“an anomaly.” She said, “...when the tribe came to us and told us they were going to do it, we were not exactly thrilled with it because we knew that this was a very unusual situation....”

McCain expressed dismay that the Department of the Interior had no regulations governing the application and finding process—despite the fact that the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act is 17 years old.

Read the story in *The Oregonian*: [Casino siting needs clarity, senators say: Maria Cantwell calls the Cowlitz Tribe’s plans “a case study” for new rules.](#)

Check out selected sections of [testimony](#).

Watch the [Oversight Hearing on Off Reservation Gaming: The Process for Considering Gaming Applications](#).

Read [written testimony submitted by the witnesses](#), including Ridgefield resident Al Alexanderson.