

We appreciate your noticing our new enterprise in your January 11 editorial “Alabama Tribe Opens New Casino” But we would like to correct some errors and omissions in your reporting.

First, we are the only federally recognized Indian tribe in Alabama. As a sovereign Indian nation contained within the larger nation of America, we can legally operate a casino on our tribal lands – a point that was omitted.

Federal law dictates that proceeds from our businesses must first be used to provide essential services like health care and housing to our people and achieve self-sufficiency. We not only fulfill our tribal obligations, we also help our neighbors. We have created more than 1600 new jobs and made charitable donations across the State. And unlike other businesses that were lured to Alabama with costly incentives, we have paid our own way.

You accurately reported that dog track owners and other gaming interests in Alabama do not share their profits. Conversely, we have steadfastly offered to donate a portion of our revenues in exchange for the promise that unregulated, illegal, and untaxed gaming be stopped, or at least limited. But our offers to negotiate such a “compact” have been ignored by State officials and now, misreported by this newspaper.

We remain optimistic that Alabama will recognize that we can create jobs, generate tourism, and add to the State’s dwindling coffers while limiting the spread of unregulated gaming. We work hard to be good neighbors and welcome the opportunity for you to know us better.

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