



**HOUSE BILL 1448  
HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 9, 2021**

**TESTIMONY OF CYNTHIA C. MONTEAU, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Cynthia Monteau, I am the Executive Director of the United Tribes Gaming Association (UTGA). I come before you today as a proponent of House Bill 1448, a bill that allows online gaming and online sports betting to be conducted and operated within the state exclusively by the Tribal Nations.

The five tribes of North Dakota formed UTGA, to promote, protect and advocate for tribal gaming and economic development. Gaming in the state began after Congress passed the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act or IGRA, in 1988. IGRA was established to regulate gaming on tribal land. It brought integrity to gaming and opportunities for tribal nations. We built casinos to create jobs, establish an economy and promote economic development in our communities. In essence, it was our opportunity to provide for ourselves through programs and services beneficial to our people. In establishing our business operations we hired outside of our tribes, from management, to security, to slot attendants, for example.

We currently employ over 3,000 full-time equivalents (FTEs). By creating jobs in our communities we dramatically impacted unemployment rates as our casinos are often among the top employers in our communities and communities surrounding our reservations.

Tribal casino operations generate over \$300 million to the state economy as we hire outside vendors and services in our operations.



We have a direct economic impact to the local markets. The state also receives benefits of personal income taxes and business taxes that are not realized by our operations. Furthermore, our casinos generously donate about \$500,000 annually to local charities, non-profits, rodeo clubs and the like. We have contributed \$125,000 annually to Lutheran Social Services in response to gambling addiction.

Supporting tribal gaming exclusive to tribes is a win-win for both the tribal nations and the state, any impact to our revenue results in a loss of jobs, loss of business to local vendors who in many cases rely heavily on our operations, and an increase in unemployment costs to the state and other financial assistance programs.

We urge a do pass of House Bill 1448.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.