

Federal Court again denies state's attempt to block Sault Tribe's Lansing, New Boston casinos

The statement below is from Sault Tribe Chairperson Aaron Payment, reacting to the Sept. 16 ruling from the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan in CASE NO. 1:12-CV-962. The ruling dismisses a lawsuit filed by the state of Michigan that sought to block the tribe's right to seek federal approval of casinos in downtown Lansing and in Huron Township, south of Detroit. U.S. District Judge Robert J. Jonker ruled that the state can't sue the Sault Tribe Board of Directors to block the tribe's effort to win federal approval of the casinos. Jonker dismissed the complaint, marking the second time the federal court has ruled against the state's efforts to halt the casinos.

Payment said, "This is yet another federal court ruling affirming the right of the Sault Tribe to move forward seeking federal approval for our proposed Lansing casino. The ruling is a clear signal that the Sault Tribe is within our rights to pursue the casinos, which will create thousands of good jobs for Mid-Michigan and southeast Michigan, and millions of dollars in new revenues for the two regions and the entire state. With the recent loss of MEDC funding, the State should see the opportunity that a Lansing Casino represents as a win-win for my tribe, the city of Lansing and the state of Michigan."

The tribe has submitted its mandatory trust land applications to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior for consideration and anticipated approval. The tribe awaits the secretary's favorable decision.

Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero issued the following statement Sept. 16 hailing the judge's ruling as another key step forward for the city of Lansing and the Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

"It is very gratifying to see the federal court rule in our favor. We have known from the beginning that the Lansing Kewadin casino project would face many obstacles, but we have remained confident that our great partners in the Sault Tribe have the legal right to move forward with the project. Today's ruling reaffirms that right and represents another significant step along the path to success, which will bring thousands of good-paying jobs to Lansing, while fully funding the Lansing Promise scholarship so every child who graduates from the city's public schools will have four years of college available to them."

To read the ruling, click [here](#):