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**RHODE ISLANDERS BELIEVE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION  
SHOULD SPONSOR LEGISLATION RETURNING TRIBAL  
GAMING RIGHTS TO NARRAGANSETT INDIAN TRIBE**

**Majority also support tribe being allowed to offer gambling on  
Charlestown reservation similar to Lincoln Park and Newport Grand**

By a two-to-one margin, a majority of Ocean State residents believe the Rhode Island congressional delegation should sponsor legislation returning to the Narragansett Indian Tribe its federal right to conduct gaming on its Charlestown reservation, according to a public opinion survey released today by the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Center for Policy Analysis (CFPA).

Approximately 56% of the state's residents believe Rhode Island's federal legislators should act to reverse the 10-year-old amendment to a federal spending bill that excluded the tribe from the uniform provisions of the U.S. Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA). IGRA expressly allows Native American tribes to conduct gaming on tribal land. Of the nation's 567 federally recognized tribes, only the Narragansetts have been stripped of their federal right to conduct gambling on their reservation.

About 28% of the respondents are opposed to the congressional action, while 16% are undecided.

A majority of residents in Providence County (63%), Newport County (58%), and Kent County (54%) support the congressional delegation sponsoring federal legislation to return to the tribe its full IGRA gambling rights, while a plurality of Washington County (44%) residents support the congressional action.

Rhode Islanders also believe that the tribe should be allowed to conduct gambling on its Charlestown reservation. By a similar margin --- 56% in favor, 28% opposed, and 16% undecided --- residents support the tribe being able to offer video lottery gambling, similar to what is offered at Lincoln Park and Newport Grand, such as video slots. The two Rhode Island gambling facilities also offer simulcast betting on thoroughbred and greyhound racing, and the sale of Rhode Island state lottery products.

"Rhode Islanders believe the tribe should possess the same right to offer gambling that Lincoln Park and Newport Grand possess, that the tribe should be able to offer gambling on its Charlestown reservation, and that the congressional delegation should sponsor legislation to make it a reality," said Dr. Clyde W. Barrow, the CFPA's director.

The public opinion survey, funded by the university's New England Gaming Project, interviewed 449 Rhode Islanders from February 14-19. The margin of error is +/- 4.1%. The survey is part of the CFPA's comprehensive, ongoing study determining New England residents' attitudes toward gambling.

The CFPA, which neither supports nor opposes gambling, studies gambling because of the increasingly significant public policy implications of gambling's fiscal, economic and social impacts. Forty-eight states and the District of Columbia allow some form of gambling, with most states relying on gambling revenues as an essential part of the state budget. Gambling is the third-largest revenue contributor to Rhode Island's state budget.

A majority of residents in Providence County (61%), Newport County (59%), and Bristol County (52%) believe the tribe should be able to offer gambling on its Charlestown reservation, while a plurality of Kent County (49%) and Washington County (46%) residents also support a tribal gaming facility.

Barrow said that despite the defeat of the controversial 2006 Narragansett Indian Casino ballot question --- which would have required Rhode Islanders to amend their state constitution to allow a Narragansett Indian Casino in the town of West Warwick --- there is strong support for repealing the so-called Chafee Amendment, which stripped the Narragansett Indian Tribe of its gaming rights under IGRA.

Despite more than a decade of debate in Rhode Island about Indian gaming, 61% of the Ocean State's residents did not know that the Narragansett Indian Tribe is the only one in the nation prohibited from conducting gaming on its tribal lands that is otherwise legal in their home state.

In March, the CFPA will release its fourth annual New England Gaming Update, which tracks spending by residents of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont and New York at the Connecticut casinos, Rhode Island VLT parlors, and Bangor, Maine's recently opened slot parlor.

Last year's study found that, in 2005, Rhode Islanders spent an estimated \$322.5 million at Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun. Massachusetts residents spent approximately \$1.1 billion --- \$890.3 million and \$190.4 million, respectively --- at the Connecticut casinos and Rhode Island VLT parlors.

A summary of the poll results will be available at 5pm, February 26, 2007 at [www.umassd.edu/cfpa](http://www.umassd.edu/cfpa) under "What's New!"