

TO: All Senators
FROM: President Jeff Atwater
SUBJECT: Gaming Compact
DATE: September 10, 2009

I want to provide you an update on where we are with regard to the proposed Gaming Compact signed by Governor Crist and the Seminole Tribe. I appreciate your phone calls and input. An initial review has raised questions regarding some of the terms of the Compact. I have directed Senate staff to work with the Governor's office to receive additional clarification. Attached is a letter I have sent to Governor Crist today, apprising him of our request.

At this time an October special session is highly unlikely. This is a complex issue and conducting a thorough analysis will take time. We have a responsibility to exercise due diligence to ensure we understand the long-term ramifications of the proposed Compact. I will continue to keep you updated. I know we all remain committed to working in a deliberative manner towards a resolution that benefits all Floridians.

Additionally, there have been some recent news reports regarding expanding a special session to include offshore drilling. As you all are aware, this issue involves a series of complex conversations with a variety of interests and impacts throughout our State. There are policy decisions to be considered that are not well served by undue haste. If, or when, the Senate takes up this issue it will be in a manner that allows for sufficient time to debate the facts and the merits of such policy. The citizens of Florida deserve a thoughtful and deliberative process that establishes a factual baseline for our conversations.

Thank you for your hard work on behalf of the people of Florida.



THE FLORIDA SENATE
SENATOR JEFF ATWATER
President

September 10, 2009

The Honorable Charlie Crist
Governor of Florida
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor:

The Senate has completed its initial review of the proposed compact you signed on behalf of the State of Florida with the Seminole Tribe of Florida, dated August 31, 2009. We share your desire to do what is best for the State and appreciate the effort you have put into this process.

As provided by section 285.710, Florida Statutes, the compact is not valid until ratified by the Legislature. The Senate is thereby obliged to fully examine the terms of this proposed compact to ensure that it comports with Florida law, to clarify the intent and effect of various terms and provisions in the proposed compact, and to satisfy ourselves that the best interests of all Floridians are sufficiently represented. The Senate will exercise due diligence in its examination of the proposed compact so that the Legislature can responsibly act on the issue.

Our initial review has prompted questions that require further clarification. I have directed Senate staff to submit a series of written questions to your staff regarding the terms of the proposed compact.

I know you agree that the State benefits from the resolution of any outstanding issues. Therefore, I am respectfully requesting you to direct your staff to expedite a complete and comprehensive response to our written questions. The receipt of such response by October 9, 2009, will provide Senate staff sufficient time to review the information and advise our Members of its findings or, if necessary, to seek further clarification.

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All of us share the goal of completing our negotiations in good faith with a resolution that benefits all Floridians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Atwater". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "A".

Jeff Atwater
President

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