



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

## Senator George Borrello Calls for Governor Hochul to Meet Seneca Nation President Armstrong on Gaming Compact

GEORGE M. BORRELLO October 18, 2023

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Current Agreement between NYS and Seneca Nation Expires in 52 days

ALBANY, NY – Senator George Borrello renewed his call for Gov. Hochul to meet with Seneca Nation of Indians President Rickey Armstrong Sr. as soon as possible to negotiate a new gaming compact before the current agreement expires on December 9.

Senator Borrello noted that he sent a letter to the Governor on September 20, urging her to start negotiations before time ran out. Since then, another month has passed with no action.

“The clock is ticking on the expiration of the current compact with just 52 days left. As the only New York State official who can approve a gaming compact between the state and the Seneca Nation, it’s imperative that Gov. Hochul agree to a meeting with President Armstrong,” Sen. Borrello said. “President Armstrong has repeatedly asked the governor to sit down with him and negotiate an agreement in good faith that is fair and addresses the needs of all parties, yet she continues to avoid the bargaining table.”

Sen. Borrello noted that any agreement would need to be approved by the state Legislature and the people of the Seneca Nation before it can be sent to the Federal Department of Interior for review and final approval.

“This agreement is essential for the economic well-being of Western New York. The Seneca Nation’s casinos have a \$1 billion annual impact on our economy. The livelihoods of tens of thousands of individuals, businesses and families across Western New York depend upon a new compact. The future of those New Yorkers is hanging in the balance,” Sen. Borrello said.

Gov. Hochul had recused herself from the negotiations, arguing her husband’s business ties with Delaware North could lead to a conflict of interest. William Hochul left Delaware North on August 15, and Gov. Hochul issued a statement saying she was no longer barred from the gaming compact negotiations.

“Now that the governor is no longer recused, there is no reason for her to delay meeting with President Armstrong,” Sen. Borrello said. “Time is running out. We need to get this done.”

Sen. Borrello’s district encompasses both the Allegany and Cattaraugus territories of the Seneca Nation of Indians.

“The Seneca Nation territories and its residents are within the 57th Senate District, so this issue is a priority for me. Seneca Nation members and businesses are a significant part of our

lives and culture, and I am proud to represent them in the State Senate,” Sen. Borrello said. “Their world-class gaming facilities and resorts are an important part of the hospitality and tourism economy of Western New York. The people of the Seneca Nation deserve a fair and equitable compact.”

The original Seneca Nation Compact was authorized in 2002. The agreement cleared the way for the development of three Seneca casinos in Western New York.

Terms of the compact included the Seneca Nation paying 25 percent, approximately \$100 million per year, of the slot and video lottery machine revenue from the casinos to the state, with a portion of that money directed to each casino’s host city. In return, the compact granted the Seneca Nation exclusive rights to operate Class III casinos in Western New York.

The September 20 letter to the Governor from Sen. Borrello is attached.