



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Statement from Senator Griffo on Proposed Oneida Indian Nation Settlement

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO May 14, 2009

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"I have long believed that the future of our region needs to be shaped by partners working in harmony, not by litigants in a court setting. A dialogue that can lead away from a cycle of litigation and into a time of collaboration is a positive step in moving towards a resolution of more than 30 years of lawsuits."

"As a firm believer in local control, I will respect the rights of Oneida and Madison Counties to reach terms with the Oneidas to resolve local tax and land use issues to the greatest good of the community. My office has not yet had time for a detailed examination of all possible ramifications of the terms that were released. The announcement of the agreement begins a very important public review process. I hope that there will be public dialogue on this proposal to discuss details, and that this will be a time for local officials and residents' opinions to be heard. Once the county has acted, we as state representatives will review the agreement and make our decision."

"I am concerned about what might be asked of New York State. The Governor must include and involve all legislators impacted and get their input about any actions that would be taken regarding sales tax, litigation and the regulatory process. I am very concerned if, as a state, we turn away from the principle of enforcing and upholding the law. New York State has a law in place that requires collecting sales taxes on tobacco products to non-Indians. Until that law is repealed or overturned in any other legal fashion, it is the law of the state and cannot be disregarded at will. The state should enforce the law fully, regardless of any potential settlement to take place at a future date."

Senator Joseph A. Griffo (R-I-C, Rome) today issued the following statement regarding an overview of a proposed settlement of land and tax issues regarding the Oneida Indian Nation of New York.