



Testimony of Joe Lavin  
Before the Public Safety Committee  
In Support of HB 6373, AAC the Policing of Tribal Land

My name is Joe Lavin and I am the Executive Director of Public Safety for the sovereign Mohegan Tribe. I started my new career with the Mohegan Tribe immediately following my retirement from the Connecticut State Police nearly 17 years ago. I am testifying in support of Bill No. 6373, an Act Concerning the Policing of Tribal Land, a bill that will serve both the Mohegan Tribe and the State by streamlining the delivery of Police Services, eliminating the present duplication of effort and work more efficiently and effectively with the State Police. This bill would in effect, recognize the Mohegan Tribe's authority and responsibility for public safety on the Mohegan Reservation and in the Mohegan Sun Casino and set the framework for establishing an agreement on how our governments will work together for everyone's benefit.

I want to begin by saying that as a Federally recognized Tribe and the operators of one of the largest casinos in the country, the safety and security of our patrons, our employees and the Tribal members is our number one concern.

The Mohegan Public Safety Department consists of multiple departments, police, surveillance and security, as well as fire and emergency medical services, working cooperatively as a single unit devoted to providing public safety..

The Mohegan Tribal Police Department has 22 officers and as of April 1<sup>st</sup> will be expanding to 26 officers. All the Tribal

THE MOHEGAN TRIBE

officers are required to be both Federally Deputized and Connecticut POST-certified. Everyone of our officers has served on a municipal police department or with the Connecticut State Police. The Department is comprised of officers and supervisors whose careers include positions in their previous departments as patrolmen, troopers, detectives, sergeants, detective lieutenant and Captain, representing a Total law enforcement experience in excess of 525 yrs. As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 9 of the department will be retired members of the Conn. State Police with 6 having been assigned to the State Police Casino Unit (3 detectives and 3 sergeants). This diversity of experience provides a solid base for a truly professional Police Department.

The Mohegan Tribal police respond to all calls at the casino and on the reservation, with staffing set to meet the changing daily demands. On a regular weekday, there are up to 5 uniformed Tribal officers on site at all times; on weekends up to 7 officers; and during peak weekend hours or during special events, the Tribal Police may have as many as 10 officers on duty.

The Mohegan Security and Surveillance teams monitor and patrol the property with more than 4000 cameras, 53 security officers and supervisors, 8 vehicles and patrol bicycles, providing eyes, ears, and support for the uniformed Tribal officers.

Our Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services Teams, recognized by the American Heart Association for their superior training and emergency response record, handle calls for service on the reservation. They are also part of the regions mutual aid, providing emergency services to numerous surrounding towns. As the result of our providing ALS

Paramedic service to the region it is much safer and many lives have been saved.

All of our Public Safety Departments work in close cooperation, 24 hours a day, seven days a week to ensure safety on every square foot of our property, from the casino floors to the garages to the parking lots.

All of the departments are in constant communication through radio and telephone, and a well-equipped dispatch center staffed with 11 employees, all State of Connecticut certified as Public Safety Tele-communicators. Our Dispatch center is equipped with COLLECT/NCIC State and Federal Terminal while having direct radio communication with the State Police.

We are frequently called upon to assist other State, municipal and federal law enforcement agencies with investigations.

I have full confidence in our Public Safety team. I can tell you without equivocation that the Mohegan Reservation and Mohegan Sun are among the safest locations in Connecticut.

This bill is right for the Tribe and the State of Connecticut, and most importantly, it is right for everyone who visits the Reservation and Mohegan Sun.