

P.O. BOX 391820 • ANZA, CA 92539 • PHONE: 951-659-2700 • FAX: 951-659-2228

February 18, 2025

Assemblymember James C. Ramos  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249

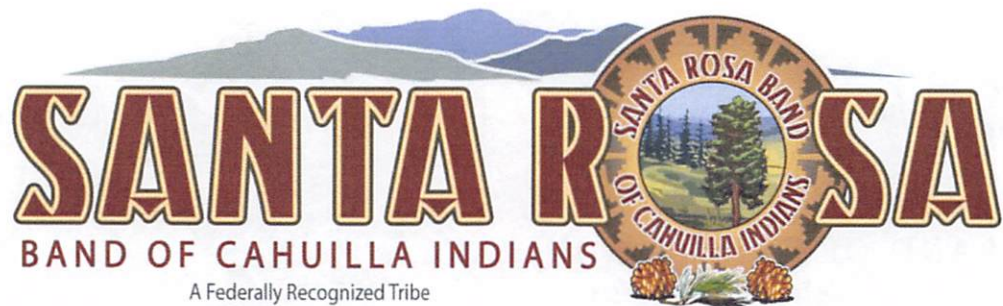
**RE: Assembly Bill 221 (Ramos) - SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Ramos,

The Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians writes in support of Assembly Bill 221, a vital piece of legislation that will assist the vast majority of California tribes. AB 221 would streamline the existing Tribal Nation Grant Fund (TNGF) process to provide annual equal distribution grants to all federally recognized tribes that are considered either nongaming or limited gaming tribes (operating less than 350 Class III gaming devices).

After months of discussions and statewide meetings, tribal leaders reached consensus on the need to change state law to simplify and streamline the TNGF grant process. This new streamlined system would provide equal annual grants, paid quarterly, to all eligible federally recognized nongaming and limited gaming tribes that apply. Under AB 221, eligible tribes who apply would receive annual equal grants of \$600,000, or at least 85% of the available moneys in the fund - a nearly 55% increase in revenue sharing payments to eligible tribal governments. This funding would support vital tribal programs including effective self-governance, economic development, housing, vocational training, tribal education, public health and safety, renewable energy, water conservation, cultural preservation, and scholarships.

AB 221 is vital for economically disadvantaged tribes as it would provide a consistent equal distribution grant from the TNGF would help stabilize funding for eligible tribal governments. This would augment the existing \$1.1 million distribution from the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund (RSTF), pursuant to tribal-state gaming compacts, by \$600,000 or more per year. From 2000 through the fourth quarter of 2024, gaming tribes have contributed more than \$1.8 billion in RSTF payments to eligible nongaming and limited gaming tribes, pursuant to tribal-state compacts. Notably, pursuant to state law, TNGF monies must be used exclusively for tribal purposes, thus AB 221 will not result in new costs to the State.



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For these reasons, Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians strongly supports AB 221 and thanks you for your authorship of this legislation.

Respectfully,

Steven Estrada, Chairman  
Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians