



Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe

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Massachusetts Senate Approves the Mashpee Wampanoag *Project First Light* Casino Compact

(Mashpee, MA – November 7, 2013) – The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe announces the achievement of another major casino milestone, as the Massachusetts Senate today approved the revised Tribal/State Compact.

“Today’s action by the Massachusetts state Senate moves our casino plans one step closer to fruition. We appreciate the Senate’s strong support for this agreement,” said Cedric Cromwell, Chairman of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe. “Our *Project First Light* destination resort casino will bring jobs and economic opportunity for Massachusetts, plus a guaranteed rate of return to the state. Our project is on a brisk pace and we are looking forward to bringing jobs and economic opportunities to our tribe, the people of Taunton and the residents of southeastern Massachusetts.”

Under the revised Compact, the Commonwealth will receive at least \$2.1 billion in revenue over 20 years. These funds will be used for education, tourism, transportation and economic development. The agreement also provides over \$300 million specifically to the southeastern Massachusetts, including funding for transportation project and assistance to surrounding communities.

Approval of the Compact for a tribal casino in Taunton is necessary for the Commonwealth to receive funding from a tribal casino. The approval is another important milestone for the tribe and is consistent with the provisions of the state’s Expanded Gaming Act of 2011.

Last June, Taunton voters overwhelmingly voted to approve the Tribe’s *Project First Light* casino. A host agreement with Taunton is already in place, and draft environmental reports are completed and filed with state and federal agencies. Recently, the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs approved a Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the tribe’s land in trust application. This is a critical step in the overall process of land acquisition for the tribe.

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“Today’s Senate vote on the Tribal/State Compact, as well as last month’s House vote, is a significant demonstration of support for Project First Light. I applaud Senate leadership and Senate members for advancing the Compact. This is a major development in protecting Tribal sovereignty while at the same time protecting the economic interests of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts,” said Chairman Cromwell.

The Mashpee Wampanoag tribe is a federally-recognized Indian tribe that has historically resided in southeastern Massachusetts, the tribe is proposing to build on lands taken into trust by the federal Department of the Interior at the interchange of Routes 24 and 140. The project is expected to create 1,000 construction jobs, more than 2,650 permanent jobs, and an \$80 million annual payroll. The \$500 million project will include a 150,000-square-foot casino; hotels with 300 rooms apiece; 3,000 slot machines, 150 tables and 40 poker tables; and an events center.

About the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe:

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, known as the People of the First Light, has inhabited present-day Massachusetts for more than 12,000 years. After an arduous process lasting more than three decades, the Mashpee Wampanoag were re-acknowledged as a federally recognized tribe in 2007 and retain full tribal sovereignty rights. The Mashpee tribe currently has approximately 2,600 enrolled citizens.

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