

Opinion:

Gambling propositions limits indigenous rights

Proposition 26, not 27, supports Native American sovereignty.

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Gambling may be expanded in California through Propositions 26 and 27, but, due to their impact on Native American communities, it's best to vote "yes" on Proposition 26 and vote "no" on Proposition 27.

Proposition 26, which is supported by over 30 tribes, will legalize in-person sports wagering on tribal lands and California's four horse tracks. Proposition 27 will legalize online sports betting outside of tribal casinos, and is backed by many big-name gambling companies such as DraftKings and FanDuel.

Currently, sports betting is illegal in California, but Proposition 26 would legalize it for tribal casinos and horse race tracks, including a 10% tax on net betting. Regulating Proposition 26 will require casinos and horse racing tracks to pay 15% toward gambling addiction programs, 70% to the general fund for state operations and 15% to the Department of Justice. It is estimated that Proposition 26 will generate tens of millions of dollars in taxes annually if passed, which would benefit gaming tribes.

In turn, this can help to consolidate power within gaming tribes, which provide services like education, health programs and unemployment benefits for the

community.

Sarah Hill, a professor of political science at Cal State Fullerton, created a series of YouTube videos to educate students and faculty on this year's ballot propositions.

"One of the things to hold in mind is that the tribal nations are supposed to be sovereign. So they really shouldn't have to negotiate for gaming, they should be able to do what they want," Hill said. However, the United States government does not treat them as sovereign, Hill said.

Proposition 26 will strengthen tribal sovereignty and increase Native American self-reliance by allowing them to control gambling on their lands, and is a responsible start to sports wagering in California.

On the other hand, Proposition 27 allows out-of-state gambling corporations to insert themselves into California's market, which will essentially take money away from the state. And to do so, they will take advantage of and work with non-gaming tribes that do not have the opportunity to participate in casino gaming.

Over \$440 million has been spent campaigning for Proposition 27, with a majority opposing it. Over a quarter of the campaign money has been donated by the San Manuel Band of Indians, and over 50 tribes are against it.

President of the Pechanga Development Corporation, Andrew Masiel, said Proposition 27 will greatly impact Indian gaming opportunities. The Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians has donated over \$30,000, and stands firmly against



SYDNEY CARROLL / DAILY TITAN

Proposition 27, but backs Proposition 26.

"This misconception of this measure of aiding the need for stamping out homelessness and the homeless environment, it's kind of false, because very little money is being afforded to that," Masiel said.

Although online sports betting is illegal in California, several loopholes enable residents to participate in offshore gambling sites, so more demands for regulation and more public health policy are necessary.

Proposition 27 will profit off of Californians and the temptation of online gambling will potentially take away traffic from tribal casinos. The fiscal impact will worsen homelessness and create more avenues of gambling addiction.

A significant concern

about both propositions is that they allocate part of the funds to homeless and gambling addiction programs to offset the harm of its gambling presence. However, Sean Hogan, an associate professor in the department of social work, said that it may not actually help.

"You can create treatment centers, but unless you can mandate offenders to go to treatment, if their motivation is low, the outcomes are generally poor," Hogan said.

When considering both of these propositions, it is important to note that the politics of both Proposition 26 and 27 may pit gaming tribes against non-gaming tribes. The advisor for the Inter-Tribal Student Council and CSUF alum, Chase Sheriff, said that for him it is a hard decision.

In an email to the Daily

Titan, Sheriff wrote, "My only issue is that the generated money really isn't going to help native assistance for the communities that need it. The intention is more centered around consolidating power to a few tribes and hoping they can battle it out with other gambling entities in the country."

California needs to prioritize tribal autonomy and sovereignty, and create a proposition that is inclusive of all tribes: gaming and non-gaming. California must create more compacts with Native American tribes that empower tribal sovereignty for non-gaming tribes.

Both propositions cannot pass, so the best bet for California's Native American tribes is to vote "yes" for Proposition 26 and vote "no" for Proposition 27.