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# LEELANAU COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

**MIKE OLTERS DORF**  
*Sheriff*

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**TOM SKOWRONSKI**  
*Undersheriff*

**To:** Mr. George Bennett, Chairman  
 Grand Traverse Band  
 Suttons Bay, Michigan 49682

**From:** Michael Oltersdorf, Sheriff  
 Leelanau County Sheriff's Department  
 Leland, Michigan 49654

**Dear Mr. Bennett:**

It has been brought to my attention that there are several issues currently being discussed relative to the "Turtle Creek Casino". While I have no personal knowledge related to that facility and its' impact upon law enforcement, I can offer insight about "Leelanau Sands Casino" and the relationship within Leelanau County.

I am very proud to say that our agency has an "excellent" working relationship with your Tribal Police Department. Evidence of this is the fact that in March of 1997, I empowered your police officers by deputizing them as Leelanau County Sheriff Deputies! Armed with this status, they have the ability to enforce State Law upon Reservation Properties and address your law enforcement needs. In return, your personnel assist us daily by providing "back-up" and responding to emergency situations until our deputies arrive on scene. Your officers have never hesitated to help when requested and this benefits the entire county! All of your officers are "MLEOTC" State certified and I would not hesitate to hire any of them as a full time Leelanau County Deputy Sheriff's. Thanks for allowing them to assist us!

The impact of the Leelanau Sands Casino on our county is minimal. With respect to violent crime, there has been no verifiable impact and statistically our County is in the bottom 10% of violent crime in the entire State. In fact, there is nothing measurable that can be directly attributed to the operation of your Casino in our County as it relates to crime. Actually, the only observed impact is the volume of traffic utilizing M-22 from the County line to the Casino. And, you measured that in your 1.7 million visitors in 1997. Understandably, a certain number of drivers will fail to adhere to the traffic laws and subsequently results in traffic citations and a few arrests. Your organization is to be commended for their ability to serve alcohol in a most prudent manner. I cannot document any instance where alcoholic beverages were served by your staff in excess with intent, resulting in an arrest or accident.

*Our staff is dedicated to making our county a safe place in which to live, work, play and raise our families!*

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**In addition, I am a School Board Member for the Suttons Bay Public Schools. Because the Suttons Bay School District serves the Reservation student population, it is very important to members of the School Board to have constant communication and a great working relationship with The Grand Traverse Band. It is very evident that the GTB cares about our children and this is proven with your ongoing funding for special projects at the Suttons Bay Public Schools! This funding addresses not only Native American issues but all of our students in the public school system too. Without this money, there would be a most definite void in our ability to offer classes and retain instructors. We applaud and thank you for your generosity in the form of grant money.**

**We are all aware that as parents and administrators, we must motivate our youth with respect to education. We must also address their idle time by providing programs and resources that are beneficial to their well being and an inspiration to be model citizens. Expected outcomes are participation in events by our youth, ethical standards, good conduct and to enhance the learning experience! In combination, those expectations will result in lower juvenile crime today and less adult crime in the future. I am very proud to say that The Grand Traverse Band is an inspirational "partner" in this endeavor!**

**Please do not hesitate to contact me if you (or anyone else) have any questions related to our agency or law enforcement services within Leelanau County.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**



**Michael Oltersdorf, Sheriff  
Leelanau County  
September 1, 1998**