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***San Juan School District Board Urges California Legislature to
Reconsider Electronic Bingo Ban
Board Joins Sac County Board of Supervisors in Call to Protect Charitable Bingo***

SACRAMENTO—The San Juan Unified School District Board unanimously adopted a resolution Tuesday night urging the California State Legislature to reconsider its ban on electronic bingo games and approve an acceptable electronic alternative that will help charities raise critically needed funds.

The School Board resolution comes seven months after the federal courts implemented a ban on electronic bingo, which was passed by the State Legislature in 2008. Board member, Larry Miles presented the resolution, citing the dramatic drop in revenue to San Juan School District booster clubs since the electronic bingo ban took effect February 1, 2010. The ban was passed in 10 days at the behest of powerful tribal gaming interests, devastating high school sports, clubs and other charities that rely on charity bingo fundraising. Bingo revenue for charities dropped nearly 50% as a result of the electronic bingo ban at a time when school budgets are strained and facing rising deficits. Seven San Juan School District high schools depend on charity bingo to sustain sports programs and academic clubs.

“Our San Juan School District is facing a possible \$54 Million deficit over the next few years, making our reliance on charitable bingo even more critical,” said Larry Miles, a San Juan Unified School District Board member. “Our legislative leaders simply must do the right thing and vote for high school athletics and band over corporate gaming interests and political contributions.”

“Charity bingo has provided funding for sports and other activities that keep our kids safe, off the streets, and in school,” said Joe Gomez, President of the California Charity Bingo Association and a long-time high school coach. “It is ironic that while the Legislature considers legalizing online gambling for private corporate interests, they have outlawed charitable electronic bingo.”

The resolution calls on the California State Legislature to reconsider the electronic bingo ban to help preserve a “safety net” in light of decreased funding for public schools. The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors passed a similar resolution 4-1 on August 10, 2010.

Background

California voters amended the State Constitution in 1976 to legalize bingo games for charitable purposes. Since then, bingo has raised hundreds of millions of dollars for important charities across California, helping thousands of students, athletes, homeless children, seniors, veterans and the disabled.

The California State Legislature voted to ban electronic forms of bingo in 2008 with the passage of SB 1369. The ban became law on January 1, 2009, but became officially effective February 1, 2010, following a federal court challenge.

California Charity Bingo Association (CCBA) is a non-profit organization representing community-based charities, volunteers, and bingo halls. CCBA's mission is to preserve and promote fun and successful bingo games that provide desperately needed funding to important charities throughout California.

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