



Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
Government Center

**Statement of Liana Onnen
Chairperson, Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
Senate Federal & State Affairs Committee
Regarding 2016 Senate Bill No. 484**

March 7, 2016

Chairman Ostmeyer and Members of the Committee:

The Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation respectfully submits the following testimony to the Committee in support of Senate Bill No. 484.

Last year, the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation ("Nation") was approached by the Governor and the Office of the Attorney General to cooperatively address tobacco issues facing the State as a result of the State's obligations under the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement ("MSA") between the State and major tobacco companies. Over the last year, representatives from the Nation and the State have negotiated a mutually beneficial compact which comprehensively addresses tobacco issues of interest to both parties. In particular, the compact establishes a framework which respects the sovereignty of both governments, prevents disputes between the parties regarding tobacco matters, and promotes economic development, all while strengthening the State's ability to protect millions of dollars in annual tobacco settlement payments.

I sincerely believe that cooperative efforts, where our two governments work together for the joint interests of our respective constituents, can and will greatly benefit the economic and social progress of northeastern Kansas. I want to personally thank the officials from the Attorney General's Office and the Administration for professionally and diplomatically working through the very complex issues involved in the area of tobacco. I think this compact is a well-thought-out solution to the State's obligations under the MSA and will be a long term benefit for all Kansans, including Prairie Band Potawatomi Tribal Members. The Nation is pleased to have been a part of this effort and we hope the Legislature will promptly ratify the compact.

The Nation continues to look forward to additional opportunities to work with the State of Kansas on issues of great importance to both of us.

Thank you for this opportunity to present this testimony and to express the Nation's support of Senate Bill No. 484.