



## Office of the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission

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### **Navajo Nation Faces Multimillion Dollar Liquor Industry in hopes to stop the sale of alcohol in Sanders and Chambers, Arizona**

**St. Michaels, Navajo Nation**-The Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission and the Renewal of Hope Task force will be attending Arizona Liquor Board hearing for the liquor license transfer from Gary McDonald to George A. Ryan on January 8, 2015 at the Department's Hearing Room at 800 W. Washington, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor in Phoenix, Arizona.

On July 22, 2014, the Renewal of Hope Task Force and the community of Nahatá Dziil (Sanders) held a special meeting with Apache County Board of Supervisors to disapprove the liquor license transfer. The special meeting adjourned and Apache County Board of Supervisors recommended that the State Liquor Board deny the transfer of the liquor license applications. This action brought hope to the community that the closure of the Ole Red Barn and Lee's Liquor stores will happen.

On December 18, 2014, Ole Red Barn owner, Gary McDonald pleaded guilty to 1 count of promoting prison contraband and 2 counts of possession of dangerous drug (methamphetamine). McDonald, sentencing is scheduled for January 13, 2015. With McDonald's plan to plead guilty to the three felonies, he is automatically disqualified from holding liquor licenses in Arizona.

With the upcoming plea hearing of Gary McDonald, the Arizona Liquor Board Hearing has become more important to see what will be the verdict of the hearing.

The hearing will be based on the qualifications, reliability, and capability of George A. Ryan. Apache County also opposes the transfer of the liquor license because of its questions about Ryan's qualifications, reliability and capability to run the liquor establishment.

Navajo Nation is concerned about the manner in which Ryan runs his businesses and continues to sell alcohol near the Navajo Nation as well as the effect of alcohol on Navajo citizens.

For more information on the Arizona Liquor Board Hearing contact the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission at 928-871-7436.

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