

Running Aces Files Lawsuit In Federal District Court under the Federal RICO Act That Names Grand Casino Hinckley, Grand Casino Mille Lacs, and Treasure Island Top Executives

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COLUMBUS, Minn.- Today, Running Aces—which operates a casino, racetrack, and restaurant in Columbus, Minnesota—filed a lawsuit in federal district court in Minnesota under the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization (“RICO”) Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 1961-1968. The lawsuit names as defendants various high-level executives at Grand Casino Hinckley and Grand Casino Mille Lacs, both owned by the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (“Mille Lacs”), and at Treasure Island Resort & Casino, owned by the Prairie Island Indian Community (“Prairie Island”).

Under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 (“IGRA”), 25 U.S.C. §§ 2701 et seq., any gaming on Indian lands within Minnesota is subject to Minnesota gaming law unless it is conducted consistent with IGRA’s requirements. IGRA specifies that class III gaming activities—such as casino card games—are “lawful on Indian lands only if” Minnesota “permits such gaming for any purpose by any person” and such activities are “conducted in conformance” with a tribal-state gaming compact “that is in effect.”

Running Aces’ complaint alleges that defendants’ casinos have been conducting class III casino card games that were not authorized by any gaming compact between the State and the Mille Lacs or the Prairie Island. Therefore, these activities constitute gambling “in violation of Minnesota criminal law and federal law,” and those violations in turn form the basis for defendants’ violations of RICO.

Running Aces’ casino lawfully offers various common casino card games, such as blackjack, Three Card Poker, and Ultimate Texas Hold’Em. By offering the same and similar card games illegally, defendants casinos’ have gained “illegal and unfair competitive advantages over Running Aces,” to the detriment of Running Aces’ business, the complaint alleges.

Running Aces has filed this lawsuit to recover damages from the high-level executives and managers who are responsible for these illegal gambling activities. Running Aces also seeks an injunction against these illegal gambling activities in the future.

Taro Ito, President & CEO of Running Aces, stated, “All that we have ever sought was to be treated fairly, compete on a level playing field, take advantage of improvements within the pari-mutuel environment, and operate without fear of being eliminated. It is our sincere desire to have our day in court and let the facts determine the outcome.”