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Oklahoma Legislature's joint panel OKs off-track wagering for Quapaws

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The Legislature's Joint Committee on State-Tribal Relations on Thursday approved a compact authorizing the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma to offer off-track wagering at its newest casino.

The tribe spent more than \$300 million to build the **Downstream Casino** Resort near Interstate 44 near the border where Oklahoma, Missouri and Kansas meet. The casino is scheduled to open in July, and owners plan to also open a hotel at the site in the fall.

State Treasurer Scott Meacham appeared before the committee to explain the compact, which Meacham said is nearly identical to previous compacts dating back to the Keating administration, differing only in its recognition of the model gaming compact language approved in 2004. If the state failed to approve the compact, the tribe may have been able to claim discrimination, as all other tribes are extended the same privileges, he added.

"In all compacts, you can't do this if the location is within 60 miles of existing Oklahoma racetrack unless get written consent of track and horseman groups at the track," said Meacham. The compact provides procedures for handling claims and audits and oversight by the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation.