

Harrah's announces all regulatory approvals necessary to close acquisition obtained

Harrah's Entertainment announced that the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) notified Harrah's that it will allow the consummation of the proposed acquisition of Harrah's by affiliates of Apollo Global Management, L.P. and TPG Capital to proceed while the NIGC finalizes its review.

Harrah's Entertainment Inc. has tentatively cleared the last remaining regulatory hurdle to the largest casino buyout ever.

The firm said Monday that the National Indian Gaming Commission has approved the company's USD 17.7 billion purchase by private equity buyers Apollo Management and Texas Pacific Group, pending final commission review. That conditional approval means Harrah's can go forward with the deal, which is expected to close in early 2008.

Harrah's and the buyers received the go-ahead for the deal last week from the Nevada Gaming Commission, capping a 10-week campaign to obtain approvals from state gambling regulators in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Louisiana, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Mississippi.

Harrah's, which had nearly USD 10 billion in revenue last year, operates more than 50 casinos including Caesars and the Imperial Palace in Las Vegas and Bally's in Atlantic City. Indian Gaming Commission approval is needed because Harrah's operates several tribal casinos as well.

The company's stock was up 52 cents to close at USD 88.85 Monday. The buyout deal calls for Apollo and Texas Pacific to

pay USD 90 per share.

Harrah's Entertainment is the world's largest provider of branded casino entertainment. Since its beginning in Reno, Nevada nearly 70 years ago, it has grown through development of new properties, expansions and acquisitions, and now owns or manages casinos on four continents.

The company's properties operate primarily under the Harrah's, Caesars and Horseshoe brand names; Harrah's also owns the London Clubs International family of casinos.