HON. SAMUEL J. STEINER Chapter 15 HEARING DATE: HEARING TIME: RESPONSE DEADLINE:

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON AT SEATTLE

In re

DELOITTE & TOUCHE, INC. as Foreign Representative of

EVERGREEN GAMING CORP., Debtor in a Foreign Proceeding. Case No. 09-13567 (SJS)

APPLICATION FOR RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN MAIN PROCEEDING AND MEMORANDUM OF LAW IN SUPPORT THEREOF

Deloitte & Touche, Inc., by and through its designated representative and Senior Vice President, Jervis Rodregues, ("Deloitte" or the "Monitor") respectfully applies to this Court for entry of an order (the "Recognition Order") pursuant to 11 U.S.C. §§ 105(a), 1504, 1507, 1515, 1517, 1519, 1520 and 1521 recognizing the Monitor as a Foreign Representative, as defined in 11 U.S.C. 101(24) and the CCAA Proceeding (as defined below) as a foreign main proceeding pursuant to 11 U.S.C. §1502(4). Alternatively, if for any reason the Court finds that CCAA Proceeding is not eligible for recognition as a foreign main proceeding, the Monitor seeks recognition of the CCAA Proceeding as a foreign nonmain proceeding, as defined in §1502(5), and relief under §§1521(a) and (b) of the Code.

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Perkins Coie LLP 1201 Third Avenue, Suite 4800 Seattle, WA 98101-3099 Phone: 206.359.8000 Fax: 206.359.9000

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This Petition is supported by the files and records herein, the accompanying Declaration of Jervis Rodrigues in Support of Application for Recognition of Foreign Proceeding (the "Rodrigues Declaration"), the Declaration of Cory Coyle In Support of Application for Recognition of Foreign Proceeding (the "Coyle Declaration"), the Declaration of John Sandrelli Concerning Canadian Law (the "Sandrelli Declaration"), and the exhibits attached thereto. The Monitor has submitted all documents required by 11 U.S.C. §1515.¹

I. <u>STATEMENT OF FACTS</u>

Chapter 15 applies where, as here, assistance is sought in the United States by a foreign representative, such as the Monitor, in connection with a foreign proceeding. 11 U.S.C. §1501(b)(1). The chapter 15 petition in this case, (and each of the related chapter 15 petitions) has been filed for the purpose of obtaining the assistance of this Court to ensure the orderly reorganization of Evergreen Gaming Corporation and its subsidiaries, and the effective and economical implementation of the CCAA Proceeding now pending in British Columbia.

A. <u>The CCAA Proceeding in Canada</u>.

On April 15, 2009, Evergreen Gaming Corporation ("Evergreen" or the "Debtor") and nineteen Canadian and American affiliates (collectively, the "Evergreen Group" or the "Debtors") filed a consolidated voluntary petition in the Supreme Court of British Columbia,

¹ By separate motion the Monitor seeks entry of an emergency order pursuant to 11 U.S.C.§§1519, 105 and 362(a) staying all actions against the Evergreen Group (as defined below) or property of the any individual debtor therein within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States, and all actions to create, perfect or enforce any lien against property of the debtors' estate pending entry of the Recognition Order pursuant to §1517 and the granting of permanent relief pursuant to 11 U.S.C. §§1520 and 1521.

Canada under the Canadian Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (the "CCAA"), R.S. C. 1985, c.C-36 and C-44 and the Business Corporations Act, S.B.C. 2002, c.57 (the "CCAA Proceeding").² Sandrelli declaration at ¶ 2. By order entered that same day, the Supreme Court of British Columbia appointed Deloitte & Touche Inc. as Monitor for all Debtors in the CCAA Proceeding. Id. at ¶ 3. A certified copy of the order (i) granting relief under the CCAA, (ii) appointing Deloitte & Touche Inc. as the Monitor and (iii) authorizing the Monitor to commence this Chapter 15 Proceeding (the "CCAA Order") is attached to the Chapter 15 Petition filed by the Monitor. Rodrigues Declaration, ¶ 2, Exhibit A.

Under the terms of the CCAA Order, the Monitor is appointed as an officer of the Court, to monitor the Debtor's Property and conduct of its Business, each as defined in the CCAA Order, with the powers and obligations set out in the CCAA or set forth in the Order. The Debtors in the CCAA Proceeding and their shareholders, officers, directors, and assistants must cooperate fully with the Monitor in the exercise of its powers and rights and discharge of its obligations. Rodrigues Declaration at Exhibit A.

The CCAA Order further provides that the Monitor is at liberty and authorized and empowered to apply to any court, tribunal, regulatory or administrative body, wherever located, for the recognition of the Order and for assistance in carrying out the terms of the Order. In particular, the Monitor and the Debtors are each authorized to apply to the United States Bankruptcy Court for relief pursuant to Chapter 15 of the Bankruptcy Code. <u>Id.</u>

² The "Evergreen Group" consists of Evergreen Gaming Corporation, the parent company, and the following direct and indirect subsidiaries: EGC Holdings Ltd., EGC Properties Ltd., Frank Sisson's Silver Dollar Ltd., Washington Gaming, Inc., Big Nevada, Inc., Little Nevada II, Inc., Little Nevada III, Inc., Silver Dollar Mill Creek, Inc., Golden Nugget Tukwila, Inc., Shoreline Gaming, Inc., Little Nevada, Inc., Snohomish Gaming Inc., Hollydrift Gaming, Inc., Royal Casino Holdings, Inc., Gameco, Inc., Gaming Management Inc., Gaming Consultants, Inc., Shoreline Holdings Inc., and Mill Creek Gaming, Inc. With the exception of EGC Holdings Ltd., EGC Properties Ltd., and Frank Sisson's Silver Dollar Ltd., each of the entities has filed chapter 15 a petition in this Court.

B. <u>The Debtor's Organization, the Nature of Its Businesses and the Center</u> of Main Interests.

Evergreen Gaming Corp. ("Evergreen"), formerly Transec Enterprise Corp., is a Canadian corporation, organized and existing under the laws of the Province of British Columbia. Evergreen was incorporated under the Business Corporations Act, S.B.C. 2002 c. 57, in 1979, and is a public company, listed on the Toronto TSX Venture Exchange (TSX-TNS-V). Evergreen has a registered address of 700-595 Howe Street, Vancouver BC V6C 2T5, and a primary business office at 11331 Coppersmith Way, in Richmond, B.C. Directly or indirectly, Evergreen owns 100% of the stock in all but one member of the Evergreen Group, which consists of a total of twenty (20) entities in British Columbia, Alberta and western Washington.³ Evergreen prepares financial statements on a consolidated basis for all of its subsidiaries for purposes of Canadian Securities law compliance. Evergreen Group's chief executive officer, Daniel Sutherland, and its President, Norman Osatuik, reside in British Columbia, and its Vice Presidents and three of four members of its Board of Directors. All Board of Directors meetings take place in Canada Coyle Declaration at ¶ 5.

The business of the Evergreen Group is owning and operating casinos and housebanked card rooms, and it owns related real estate and casino management and service businesses in Alberta, Canada and the United States. Evergreen's primary assets are the stock in its subsidiaries, each of which either operates a casino or provides related services. Evergreen's largest single asset is Silver Dollar Casino, a 100,000 square foot casino and entertainment complex in Calgary, Alberta, featuring slot machines, gaming tables, lottery

³ Washington Gaming, Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Evergreen Gaming, Inc.; each of the Washington subsidiaries except Shoreline Gaming, Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Washington Gaming. 50% of the stock in Shoreline Gaming, Inc., dba Golden Nugget Casino is owned by Michael McCarthy, a resident of Washington. The other 50% is held by Washington Gaming.

 terminals, a 38-lane bowling alley, a 1,200 seat live entertainment facility and numerous related food and beverage service outlets. Coyle Declaration, \P 6.

By comparison, the Washington subsidiary operations are each limited to no more than 15 gaming tables, and some have as few as six tables. The largest Washington card room (Club Hollywood) is less than one-fourth (1/4) the size of the Calgary casino and one, the Golden Nugget Casino in Tukwila, is only forty-five hundred square feet; none of the Washington casinos have slot machines, and none of them have bowling alleys or live entertainment facilities. <u>Id.</u> at ¶ 7.

Although Evergreen subsidiaries operate ten casinos in King and Snohomish Counties,⁴ the Evergreen Group's headquarters, where all significant business decisions are made, is in British Columbia, and the business is an integrated international enterprise that is owned by a publicly traded Canadian company. Evergreen's default on the Fortress loan (as discussed below) and its overall plan for organization of the Evergreen Group's business will be the focus and purpose of the CCAA Proceeding.

C <u>The Debtors' Financial Condition</u>

On October 2, 2007, Evergreen and Fortress Credit Corp. (Fortress), as agent for the Lenders and as a Lender itself, entered into a Credit Agreement pursuant to which the Lenders extended to Evergreen approximately US\$29 million in credit (the "Secured Debt"). The total Secured Debt now alleged to be due, including principal, interest, fees and costs, is approximately \$30.1 million. The Secured Debt is guaranteed by the each member of the

⁴ The operating Washington casinos are The Silver Dollar Casino – Seattle (Big Nevada, Inc); Silver Dollar Casino Tukwila and Silver Dollar Casino – Renton (Little Nevada, Inc.); Silver Dollar Casino - Mill Creek (Silver Dollar Mill Creek, Inc.); Golden Nugget Casino – Tukwila (Golden Nugget Casino Tukwila, Inc.); Golden Nugget Casino – Shoreline (Shoreline Gaming, Inc.); Royal Casino (Snohomish Gaming, Inc.); Hollywood Casino and Drift On Inn Casino (Hollydrift Gaming, Inc.) and Riverside Casino (Mountlake Gaming, Inc.). Each of these entities is a Washington corporation and all except Mountlake Gaming, Inc is a Debtor in the CCAA Proceeding and has filed a chapter 15 petition.

Evergreen Group, and is secured in part by a lien on substantially all of the Debtors' assets, including all deposit accounts held with any bank or financial institution. Fortress and the Washington State subsidiaries are also party to a Deposit Account Control Agreement with Banner Bank, the Debtors' Washington depository bank, under which Fortress has the right to seize control over all of the Debtors' bank accounts, including main accounts, payroll accounts and ATM accounts. Coyle Declaration at ¶ 9.

On April 1, 2009, Fortress served a Notice of Default and Acceleration on Evergreen and simultaneously served a Notice of Demand under Guaranty (the "Demand") on the Debtor, threatening to foreclose on its collateral if the Demand is not satisfied. Coyle Declaration, ¶ 10 and Exhibit A.

The Debtors' ordinary course business operations are essentially solid. All Debtors are substantially current on all trade debt and tax obligations, the employees have been and continue to be paid regularly, and the Washington subsidiaries are in compliance with all fiscal and accounting requirements of the Washington State Gambling Commission. Coyle Declaration at ¶ 8. The sole need for the Evergreen Group's decision to seek protection under the CCAA stems from Evergreen's default with respect to the \$29 million obligation to Fortress. Because the nineteen other Canadian and American members of the Evergreen Group are each a guarantor of Evergreen's debt to Fortress, all twenty Debtors were forced to seek the protections of the Canadian bankruptcy system as a group while Evergreen and Fortress work out their differences. Coyle Declaration at ¶ 11. The restructuring of the Evergreen Group can best and most efficiently be accomplished if CCAA Proceeding is designated the "foreign main proceeding" under §1517.

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LEGAL ARGUMENT

Chapter 15 of Bankruptcy Code is intended to promote cooperation in cross-border bankruptcies and authorizes the recognition and primacy of foreign main proceedings. The stated purpose of Chapter 15 is to "incorporate the model law in cross-border insolvency so as to provide effective mechanisms for dealing with cases of cross-border insolvency with the objectives of (1) cooperation between (a) courts of the United States, United States trustees, trustees, examiners, debtors, and debtors in possession; and (b) the courts and other competent authorities of foreign countries involved in cross-border insolvency cases; (2) greater legal certainty for trade and investment; (3) fair and efficient administration of cross-border insolvencies that protects the interests of all creditors, and other interested entities, including the debtor; (4) protection and maximization of the value of the debtor's assets; and (5) facilitation of the rescue of financially troubled businesses, thereby protecting investment and preserving employment." 11 U.S.C. § 1501(a).

In interpreting and applying chapter 15, "the court shall consider its international origin, and the need to promote an application of [chapter 15] that is consistent with the application of similar statues adopted by foreign jurisdictions." 11 U.S.C. §1508. The key terms in a chapter 15 case are "foreign proceeding", "foreign representative" and "foreign main proceeding." Those terms are defined in the Bankruptcy Code as follows:

The term "foreign proceeding" means a collective judicial or administrative proceeding in a foreign country, including an interim proceeding, under a law relating to insolvency or adjustment of debt in which proceeding the assets and affairs of the debtor are subject to control or supervision by a foreign court, for the purpose of reorganization or liquidation.

11 U.S.C.§ 101(23).

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The term "foreign representative" means a person or body... authorized in a foreign proceeding to administer the reorganization or the liquidation of the debtor's assets or affairs or to act as a representative of such foreign proceeding.

11 U.S.C.§ 101(24).

The term "foreign main proceeding" means a foreign proceeding pending in the country where the debtor has the center of its main interests.

11 U.S.C.§ 1502(4).⁵

The CCAA Proceeding is a judicial proceeding, within the meaning of §101(23). It is a proceeding for the purpose of the adjustment of debts of the Evergreen Gaming and the nineteen other members of the Evergreen Group. Sandrelli Declaration at ¶¶ 4-5. Pursuant to the CCAA Order, the assets and affairs of all twenty Debtors and the actions of the Monitor are subject to the control and supervision of the Canadian Court. By virtue of its appointment as Monitor and by the terms of the CCAA Order, the Monitor qualifies as "foreign representatives" pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 101(24). The Monitor is, therefore, entitled to recognition by this Court.

Section 1515 provides that the application for recognition of a foreign proceeding need only be accompanied by proof of the commencement of the foreign proceeding and appointment of the foreign representative. The Monitor has satisfied the requirements of §1515, so the petition to recognize the foreign proceeding under Chapter 15 should be granted. The only issue to be decided is whether the CCAA Proceeding shall be designated as the foreign main proceeding as defined in §101 (23) of the Code.

⁵ The term "foreign nonmain proceeding" means a foreign proceeding, other than a foreign main proceeding, pending in a country where the debtor has an establishment. 11 U.S.C. §1502(5).

The CCAA Proceeding Is a Foreign Main Proceeding

Chapter 15 is the successor to former 11 U.S.C. §304. It was enacted as part of the 2005 "BAPCPA" amendments to the Bankruptcy Code, as an implementation of the Model Law on Cross-Border Insolvency promulgated by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law in 1997. In re Pro-Fit International4, Ltd., 391 B.R. 850, 857 (Bankr. C.D. CA 2008). In brief, Chapter 15 authorizes a "foreign representative" appointed in a "foreign proceeding" to seek recognition of that foreign proceeding by filing a petition in the United States Bankruptcy Court. See 11 U.S.C. § 1501 et seq.

A case brought under former §304 Bankruptcy Code was "an ancillary case in which a United States Bankruptcy Court may apply its process to give effect to orders entered abroad." <u>NRA v. Thornhill Global Deposit Fund, Ltd.</u>, 245 B.R. 1, 6 n.9 (Bankr. D. Mass. 2000) <u>aff'd, Mercurious Investment Holding, Ltd. v. Aranaha</u>, 247 F.3d 328 (1st Cir. 2001). Section 304 authorized the bankruptcy court to take such steps and to "order other appropriate relief" as is necessary to reserve the integrity of the foreign proceeding. 11 U.S.C. § 304(b)(3). Section 304 was interpreted broadly, "allowing the bankruptcy court to mold relief in near blank check fashion to enforce the codes underlying equitable principles." <u>Thornhill Global</u>, 245 B.R. at 7; <u>Angulo v. Kedzep Ltd.</u>, 29 B.R. 417, 418-19 (Bankr. S.D. Tex. 1983); <u>In re Culmer</u>, 25 B.R. 621, 624 (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. 1982). As stated by one court, "where the requirements of §304(a) are satisfied, [the court] has no discretion to dismiss the petition under § 304(a)." <u>In re Taylor</u>, 176 B.R. 903, 904 (Bankr. C.D. Cal. 1995) If anything, the duty to recognize and cooperate with pending foreign proceedings has been expanded under Chapter 15.

Canada's bankruptcy reorganization process, the CCAA, resembles that of the United States, in particular a case under chapter 11. The CCAA process includes the

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Perkins Coie LLP 1201 Third Avenue, Suite 4800 Seattle, WA 98101-3099 Phone: 206.359.8000 Fax: 206.359.9000

imposition of a stay, centralization of the debtor's assets under the control of a trustee with fiduciary obligations to the court and creditors, the involvement of creditors through designated representatives, court review of transactions, notice to creditors of disposition of property, remedies for avoidance of certain transfers, remedies related to the marshaling of assets and equitable distribution to creditors, and provisions for the restructuring of the Petitioners business. Sandrelli Declaration at \P 5. The CCAA process undoubtedly fits within the definition of a "foreign proceeding" in §101(23).

In the absence of contrary evidence, a debtor's registered office is presumed to be the center of the debtor's main interests for purposes of determining "main" or "nonmain" status. 11 U.S.C. §1516(c). In this case, however, there is ample evidence that the Evergreen Group's center of main interest is in Canada, despite the registration of a number of the subsidiary Debtors in Washington. First and foremost, Evergreen Gaming Corporation, the parent company, is a publicly traded Canadian company, listed on the Toronto Venture Exchange. Any person who invests in Evergreen therefore can be presumed to know they are investing in a Canadian enterprise.

Senior management is almost entirely in Canada: the CEO, the President, two Vice Presidents and three of four directors of Evergreen reside in Canada and all board of directors meetings take place in Canada. Moreover, the day-to-day operations of the Evergreen Group are conducted from the corporate headquarters in Richmond, B.C. Strategic and operational management functions are also directed and carried out from the Richmond B.C. headquarters. The Group's largest asset is in Alberta, Canada, and the need for the Debtors to seek protection in the CCAA Proceedings stems solely from Evergreen's default, in Canada, under the Fortress loan agreement. Coyle Declaration at ¶¶ 5, 11.

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Although the Evergreen Group operates ten casinos in Washington State, the real center of main interests is in Canada, where the senior management lives, where all major business decisions are made and where the financial management of the CCAA restructuring will take place. It would make little sense (economically or otherwise) to have the corporate parent and some of the wholly owned subsidiaries in this close-knit Group undergoing reorganization under the CCAA in Canada while other subsidiaries tried to carry out a separate reorganization under chapter 11 in this country.

II. <u>CONCLUSION</u>

The CCAA Proceeding is a foreign proceeding pending in Canada and the Monitor is a designated, court-appointed representatives of the foreign proceeding. The Evergreen Group is an integrated, international enterprise with interests in two Canadian provinces and two counties in western Washington. Its most significant assets, its most significant liability and its center of main interests are all located in Canada. For the foregoing reasons, the Monitor asks that this Court grant the Monitor's Application for Recognition of the CCAA Proceeding as a foreign main proceeding with respect to Evergreen Gaming Corporation and each of the chapter 15 petitioning Debtors in this Court.

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Perkins Coie LLP 1201 Third Avenue, Suite 4800 Seattle, WA 98101-3099 Phone: 206.359.8000 Fax: 206.359.9000

DATED: April 15, 2009

PERKINS COIE LLP

By: /s/Bruce G. MacIntyre Bruce G. MacIntyre, WSBA No. 18984 BMacIntyre@perkinscoie.com

By: /s/ Alan D. Smith Alan D. Smith, WSBA No. 24964 ADSmith@perkinscoie.com

By: /s/ John S. Kaplan John S. Kaplan, WSBA No. 23788 JKaplan@perkinscoie.com

By: /s/ Brian A. Jennings Brian A. Jennings, WSBA No. 32509 BJennings@perkinscoie.com

1201 Third Avenue, Suite 4800 Seattle, WA 98101-3099 Telephone: 206.359.8000 Facsimile: 206.359.9000

Attorney for Foreign Representative Deloitte & Touche, Inc.

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Perkins Coie LLP 1201 Third Avenue, Suite 4800 Seattle, WA 98101-3099 Phone: 206.359.8000 Fax: 206.359.9000