ROBERT SARGENT SHRIVER III

April 19, 2007

Mr. Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Attorney General of the State of California
Department of Justice
1300 I Street, Suite 125
P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, California 94244-2550

Re: Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the potential impacts on Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park (Allensworth Park) by the proposed dairies recently approved by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors.

Allensworth Park preserves a town founded by Colonel Allen Allensworth, a former slave, as an agricultural haven for other former slaves and sharecroppers in the Central Valley. Created in the 1970's, Allensworth Park receives thousands of visitors annually. Because of the historic importance of Allensworth Park to the people of the State of California, the California Department of Parks and Recreation has invested several million dollars to preserve and restore 21 historic buildings that provide visitors with an accurate picture of life in Allensworth at the turn of the 20th century. Allensworth Park is used for recreation and has camping facilities, and several festivals are held there each year.

I have reviewed information about the proposed dairies and I am very concerned about their potential impacts on Allensworth Park. It is my understanding that Tulare County has approved the sitting of two dairies that will hold, in confined quarters, over 12,000 animals on about 320 acres. The rest of the site will be used for spreading manure and manure wastewater. A two-lane road separates the site from the Allensworth settlement, a federally-listed National Register Historic District. The dairy animals and manure will be housed barely a mile away from the core of the historic site. The flies, odor and air and water pollution as well as the potential health and scenic impacts created by the presence of 12,000 plus cows at the edge of Allensworth Park would threaten the quality of the visitor-experience and the historical integrity of this irreplaceable state resource.

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I serve as Chair of the State Park and Recreation Commission to help protect our state parks from this type of danger. I am very concerned about the continued viability of Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park if these dairies are built as proposed. However, I am writing only as a private citizen. The Commission has not taken a position on this question. As a private citizen, I hope you study appropriate legal actions to ensure the future viability of the Park.

Sincerely,

Bobby Shriver