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California State Senate

SENATOR DEAN FLOREZ

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ACCECT COMMITTERS Celifornia Wine Indiarry Publis Fiellth & the Bardranmans

March 6, 2008

Mr. Carl Artman Assistant Secretary, indian Affairs 1849 C Street, NW, Room 4160 Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Artman:

The North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indian's ("North Fork") application to take 305 acres of land into trust for development of a Class III gaming facility in the City of Madera raises many practical and very serious quality of life concerns for residents of the Central Valley. As you know, the project site is adjacent to State Highway 99, a highly traveled and already congested vital north-south thoroughfare in the Central Valley.

More importantly, I believe the proposed location makes a mockery of the long-held understanding that Indian gaming was to remain on "Indian lands" as implied in Proposition 1A. Recognized Indian lands under the North Fork tribe's jurisdiction are at least 40 miles away in adjacent footbills. Taking land into trust, miles away from already existing tribal lands, for the sole purpose of conducting Class III gaming sets an objectionable precedent that could result in a grand race to place other major casinos along Highway 99.

While I have great respect for the North Fork tribe and its leaders and I appreciate the circumstances they face, other similarly situated tribes have adjusted and have made the best use of their existing resources. Certainly the Bureau of Indian Affairs has a must responsibility to all tribes and should not ignore the sociocconomic impacts this proposed project will have on other wibes within the greater Central Valley.

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I strongly encourage your office to adhere to the standards set for in federal law and take into consideration the voters' understanding that tribal gaming was to occur on historical Indian lands when reviewing the North Fork proposal before you

Dean Florez State Senator, District 16