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## LETTERS TO THE TIMES

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### How to Write to Us

The Los Angeles Times welcomes expressions of all views. Letters should be brief and become the property of The Times. They may be edited and republished in any format. They must include valid mailing address and telephone number. Pseudonyms and initials will not be used.

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Your report struck close to home. In 1996, the USC Neighborhood Outreach program teamed with a local nonprofit group to rehabilitate a large house in North University Park at 2713 Severance St. Our goal was to provide transitional housing and services to recently emancipated foster youth. Many of the resources of USC would have been made available to these young adults.

Local foundations and agencies understood the need, and we were able to raise close to \$1 million to rehabilitate the property and retire debt. The Los Angeles Housing Department held the mortgage on the property. Our project failed because the house was designated a contributing historical structure. Even after we had raised the funds to pay off the mortgage and free LAHD from the chain of title, the agency would not allow us to remove an addition at the rear of the structure so that the building could be upgraded and expanded. LAHD had the authority to permit our rehabilitation effort to proceed but refused to waive its discretionary requirements. The house sits vacant and abandoned. It is a product of bureaucratic indifference.

**James E. Moore II**  
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