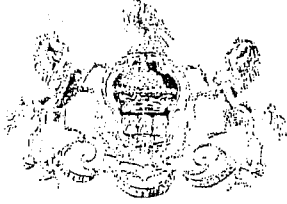


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SENATOR
BOB REGOLA
39TH DISTRICT

183 MAIN CAPITOL
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3039
PHONE: 717-787-6063
FAX: 717-772-0580



COMMITTEES

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COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY
COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
GAME AND FISHERIES
STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY

bregola@pasen.gov
www.senatorregola.com

Senate of Pennsylvania

March 21, 2006

Dr. Gerald Zahorchak, Secretary
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street, 10th Floor
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126

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Dear Dr. Zahorchak:

As a member of the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, I am writing to you regarding the proposed changes to Chapter 339 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code as it pertains to Vocational Education. I am extremely concerned that the enforcement of a 360 hour requirement for reimbursement for vocational education will have a negative impact on these programs in Pennsylvania high schools.

The agricultural community has proven to be an essential presence in Pennsylvania. On November 29, 2004, Governor Rendell signed into law the Agriculture Education Loan Forgiveness Program for teachers of agriculture education, and recently, the Governor announced the release of approximately \$150 million for farmland preservation. Requiring students to devote approximately two hours per day to agricultural education, in addition to college preparatory courses, will cause a setback to Pennsylvania's agricultural future.

I urge you to reconsider this proposed revision to Chapter 339. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

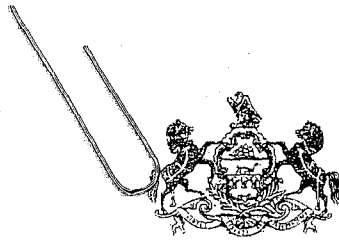
Sincerely,

BOB REGOLA
SENATOR, 39th DISTRICT

BR/lmr

cc: Honorable Mike Waugh, Chairman
Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs

742 to Anne
plus as
softline under



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

333 MARKET STREET

HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17126-0333

May 8, 2006

SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

717-787-5820 (TEL)

717-787-7222 (FAX)

717-783-8445 (TTY)

The Honorable Bob Regola
Senate of Pennsylvania
Senate Box 203039
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3039

Dear Senator Regola:

Thank you very much for expressing your concerns regarding the standards under review in Chapter 339. It is imperative that the Department of Education (PDE) receive feedback when considering the implementation of regulations and standards. We appreciate your commitment to Career and Technical Education (CTE) and look forward to continued efforts in serving the students of Pennsylvania.

In regard to the proposed changes to Chapter 339, the Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE) has been thoroughly reviewing how to best serve pupils, and how this can best benefit the needs of business and industry, including Agriculture Education. A study, by Jobs For The Future, has given us guidelines for establishing best practices statewide. This study has found that along with academic rigor, Pennsylvania should align CTE with industry relevant training and standards. Sufficient time must be spent in the CTE classroom to ensure we are meeting these standards.

We are considering all options in the effort to strengthen CTE programming, and also improve math and communication skills. In fact, current school improvement initiatives require integrating academic standards into CTE programs. It is not our intention to eliminate any Agriculture Education program, rather to provide resources for strengthening curriculum content and improving student occupational and academic achievement. The Department will make every effort in ensuring that comprehensive schools get the support they need.

Quality career and technical education programs require a continuing commitment and dedication of schools, legislators, business and industry and the Department of Education. The Bureau of Career and Technical Education stands ready to provide the needed resources and support. Together, we can provide quality education for all students in Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gerald L. Zahorchak".

Gerald L. Zahorchak, D.Ed.

cc: The Honorable Mike Waugh, Chairman Agriculture and Rural Affairs
Diane Castelbuono, Deputy Secretary, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Office of Government Relations