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MICHAEL K. HANNA, MEMBER
29 BELLEFONTE AVENUE
LOCK HAVEN, PENNSYLVANIA 17745
PHONE: (570) 748-5480
TOLL-FREE: 1 (800) 845-7846

102 TURNPIKE STREET
P.O. BOX 1134
MILESBERG, PENNSYLVANIA 16853
PHONE: (814) 353-8780

302 MAIN CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 202076
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2076
PHONE: (717) 772-2283



House of Representatives
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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

April 15, 2008

Hon. Arthur Coccodrilli
Independent Regulatory Review Commission
333 Market Street
14th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear Mr. Coccodrilli:

We appreciate the Independent Regulatory Review Commission's diligent review of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's *Regulation #6-298 Vocational Education*, and have reviewed the comments issued by the commission for the department's consideration in preparing the final regulation.

The proposed regulation provides a thoughtful approach to promoting accountability standards for career technical education programs and establishes technical institute program standards and a program review process.

Although we support the department's regulation in general, we are concerned that certain academic courses may not be counted toward the minimum time requirement for students enrolled in agriculture education programs. Agriculture students planning to pursue post-secondary agriculture studies deserve programs that provide the academic credentials necessary for program admission. We understand the Department of Education already informally allows agricultural education programs to count approved academic courses that will be identified on each Agriculture Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) description. The proposed regulation, however, does not provide for an explicit recognition of academic courses to achieve the minimum total hour requirement.

We appreciate the fact that the department has responded to most of the concerns presented by our agricultural educators, and expect that you will approve this regulation. Meanwhile, we trust the Department of Education will continue to work with agriculture educators to address their legitimate outstanding concerns.

Very truly yours,

Mike Hanna
Chairman
Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee

Arthur Hershey
Minority Chairman
Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee

cc: Gerald Zahorchak, Secretary, Department of Education
Karl Girton, Chairman, Board of Education
Mr. Dan Fisher
Mr. Don Wills
Mr. Fred Brown