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To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in response to Title 22, Chapter 339; which is currently under review by the house and senate. This document mandates in order for a school entity to receive payments on the account of pupils enrolled in Career and Technical Education (CTE) these pupils must complete a minimum of 360 hours in order to receive state reimbursement. I am adamantly opposed to this regulation based on my experiences as a CTE student and as a CTE teacher. This regulation limits student opportunities academically and gives CTE the "dumping ground" stigma; where schools will only send low achieving students as those students will not have to pursue academics.

As a CTE student I attended the Northern Tier Career Center in Towanda. I was a student in the Electronics/Computer Service Technology program. Through CTE I learned not only how to fix computers, but what I was to spend the rest of my life doing, teaching! Attending the Career Center was a challenge. Computer Technology and Electronics is heavily based on Physics which uses Algebra and Trigonometry and my home school had NEVER scheduled a CTE student with academic classes. It was a struggle as the guidance personnel at my home school had to look at my schedule and figure what academics would fit into the time I had available. When I started taking the CTE course it was apparent that most of the other sending schools did not send academic students either. I was in a class with 12 students, of which only 2 of us had High School Algebra I by the 11th grade. Taking CTE was a great experience, but a lot of time was wasted as 1st year half day about, 2nd year half day about, 1st year 9 week about, 2nd year 9 week about, 1st year half year about, and 2nd year half year about were all in the same classroom. With this setup only one sixth of the instructor's time is available for any specific group. Along with the time lost due to transportation it is no wonder that CTE students do not score nearly as well on the PSSA. Although I enjoyed the hands on component of CTE, I think the system could have been much more productive.

As I was finishing high school I wanted to pursue a college experience with hands-on lab opportunities. This led me to California University of PA as I majored in Technology Education. The labs were not specific to Computer Technology, but this allowed experiencing a variety of hands on classes. When I began the teaching component of college, I found that the shorter period of time was both good and bad. Because the periods were shorter multiple groups were not scheduled into the same period of time, this allowed me as a teacher to concentrate on the group at hand. At the same time projects were spread out over longer periods of time. Having come from a CTE background I was surprised how much we were able to accomplish, mostly because I was able to help the students and focus on teaching one group.

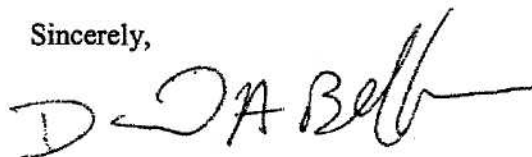
I now hold PA teaching certificates in: Technology Education K-12, Cooperative Education 7-12, Vocational Computer Maintenance Technology, and Vocational Networking Systems Technology. I teach at a comprehensive High and most of my classes are double periods (approx 80 minutes). In order for student to complete my Computer Maintenance Technology program students are only required to take one double period; compared to the 4 periods per day for 2 years in a similar program at a CTC. The difference being is that I as an

instructor can dedicate 80 minutes to those students; totaling 240 hours. When a Career and Technical Center (CTC) offers a program they must manage multiple groups, for example, a teacher would have 4 periods with 4 groups; this mean that despite the fact that a student is in the CTC for 160 minutes per day, each group of students is only received 40 minutes with the instructor daily. This translates to 120 hours per year with the instructor or 240 hours with the instructor to complete the program. This system leaves a lot of time wasted where students must wait for their teacher. Having classes with single groups allows programs simply operate more efficiently and allows students more time to pursue other classes.

In closing I feel that in order for this country to stay completeive in a world market we must improve our Career and Technical Education. However putting an hour on programs does not guarantee that students will excel in their chosen area; but it does however limit student flexibility and ability to take other courses. I understand that many schools do not have the ability to offer CTE without having multiple groups, but please do not restrict the schools that can offer single groups; single groups have as much instructional time with the instructor, have comparable scores on the NOCTI and Industry exams, and typically better average PSSA scores. By forcing everyone to comply with the hour requirement we will be taking a step backward because we will not attract students who have acceptable PSSA scores and does not allow students the flexibility to improve them. It will not attract students who are hard working and want to maximize their learning experience but will attract students who want to waste time.

If you have any questions or concerns please to hesitate to contact me. Thanks you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. A. Becker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

David Becker