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July 8, 2008

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Janice Staloski, Director
Bureau of Community Program Licensuk EFFENDENT REGULATORY
and Certification
REVIEW COMMISSION
Department of Health
132 Kline Plaza, Suite A
Harrisburg, PA 17104

RE: Regulation No. 10-186

Dear Ms. Staloski,

The Department of Health is proposing changes to the state confidentiality protections of drug and alcohol addiction treatment records. (Regulation No. 10-186) We believe these changes will weaken the current confidentiality protections and allow release of personal information beyond diagnosis to payers and many others.

This regulation is opposed by the Department of Health's own Pennsylvania Advisory Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse (three votes of opposition), the Pennsylvania Association of County Drug and Alcohol Administrators, the Pennsylvania Recovery Organizations-Alliance, the Drug and Alcohol Service Providers Organization of Pennsylvania. In addition, the Independent Regulatory Review Commission has received over 160 letters of opposition from members of the House and Senate, treatment programs, people in recovery, county administrators and many others.

Despite all of this opposition, the Department has moved forward with a new version that fails to address any of the concerns raised.

The state confidentiality regulations currently in place work well and we believe strike the right balance between protecting personal privacy while simultaneously providing sufficient information to payers. The current state confidentiality protections should be maintained with no changes.

We the co-signers urge immediate withdrawal of this proposed regulation.

Cc: Independent Regulatory Review Commission

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