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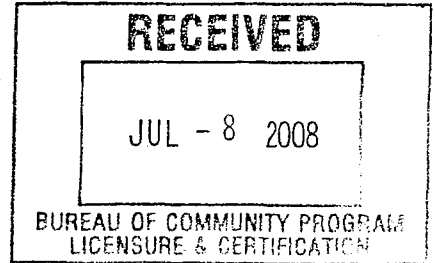
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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

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June 30, 2008

The Honorable Edward G. Rendell
Governor
225 Main Capitol
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Rendell:

I am writing to express my opposition to the Department of Health's proposed Regulation number 10-186 relating to Confidentiality of Patient Records and Information.

Under 4 Pa. Code, Section 255.5, patients being treated for substance abuse addictions are provided with vital privacy protection. Recovery from drug and alcohol abuse is a very personal matter; privacy of patients should be protected. Proposed Regulation 10-186 would threaten the privacy protection that these patients desperately need. The proposed regulation would release this confidential information to an insurance provider. This information has no bearing on the right of payment to the provider. Current law provides adequate information to assure to provide for payment determinations and is not in conflict with federal statutes. Simply put, this regulation is unnecessary.

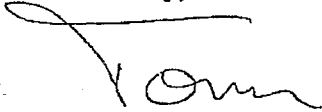
This regulation has been opposed by the Department of Health's own Pennsylvania Advisory Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, the Pennsylvania Association of County Drug and Alcohol Administrators, the Pennsylvania Recovery Organizations-Alliance, and the Drug and Alcohol Service Providers of Pennsylvania.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

Getting help while struggling with drug and alcohol addiction is already difficult enough; this decision will be made even more difficult if one's privacy is not protected during the rehabilitation process. Furthermore, the social stigma associated with drug and alcohol addiction is already very great, this would only perpetuate the difficulty recovering those addicted to drugs and alcohol face.

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

I urge you to withdraw this proposed regulation so that those citizens who are working towards recovery from drug and alcohol addictions are ensured the privacy they need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Thomas C. Petrone
Chairman
Urban Affairs Committee

cc: The Honorable Calvin B. Johnson