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LEGISLATIVE POSITION



Office of Governmental and Member Relations

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TO: House Education Committee members
SUBJECT: House Resolution 456, P.N. 2641 (Rep. Clymer)
DATE: October 2, 2009

PROCEIVED
OCT - 6 AM 10:58
INDEPENDENT REGULATORY REVIEW COMMISSION

HOUSE RESOLUTION 456

Bill Summary

House Resolution 456 broadly urges on the governor to cease any funding of implementation of high school graduation requirements until the General Assembly establishes a specific policy and appropriation and votes on them. It also requests the governor to impress upon his cabinet officials to honor the citizens of Pennsylvania to uphold the Constitution and calls upon the Independent Regulatory Review Commission to consider whether proposed high school graduation requirements have been given due consideration by the General Assembly and the governor, in accordance with the Regulatory Review Act before a decision is made on final form regulations dealing with high school graduation requirements.

PSBA Position

In July, the PSBA Board of Directors approved a resolution withholding support for the final form regulations, commonly referred to the Keystone Exam proposal. Specifically, the Board cited two provisions added to the regulations after PSBA's March agreement with the State Board as the reasons for concern. The first issue is that the regulations now state that the results of Keystone Exams will count for 33% of a student's final course grade. The second issue is that a student will be given a "0" grade on any Keystone Exam where he or she scores below the "basic" level. An August conference call to the PSBA Board of Directors confirmed that many of the association's members had similar concerns about the proposal, specifically the two issues mentioned previously.

Based on the direction provided by the association's Board of Directors, PSBA submitted a letter to the Independent Regulatory Review Commission on Sept. 22 (attached) asking the commission to communicate to the State Board that it would not approve the regulation unless changes were made to these provisions and requesting the commission to toll the time for review if the State Board indicates that such changes would be made.

PSBA believes that HR 456 sends a strong message to IRRC that the majority of members of the House of Representatives are opposed to the Keystone Exams proposal. We anticipate that the IRRC commissioners will consider this message as they decide on the proposal on Oct. 22.