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October, 20, 2009

To Whom it May Concern:

As a higher education administrator at a mid-size public university in Pennsylvania who is responsible for admission of students, as well as student retention, I see the most recent "compromise" Keystone Exam proposal as a positive step.

Students in Pennsylvania, in particular those in rural and urban environments, need clear expectations for the preparation needed to be successful in college and the work force. I commend the efforts to arrive at this proposal.

Although I commend the efforts, the one area the exam does not address are the types and levels of high school courses students need to complete for college admission and success. This is an item that needs to be addressed at the state level.

Assuming the competencies of this exam meet the expectations for college and work force entrance, I support the requirement for remediation in the subject area a student failed, and for providing opportunities to re-take the test, before the student graduates. The opportunity for the integration of locally designed exams, designed to determine proficiency, allows for customization related to unique aspects of the school district, but will likely create a significant work load issue for the districts.

If this assessment has/will have similar reliability and predictability for measuring key outcomes/mastery as the 11<sup>th</sup> grade PSSA exams, and will take less time out of the instructional day, this is a true advantage.

I understand the cost of this proposal is \$40 million less than the original proposal. With the phasing out of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade PSSA exam, I am not sure how the final costs will compare with the cost of the PSSA. My hope is the cost of this exam (once implemented) will be similar or less than the costs associated with the 11<sup>th</sup> grade PSSA.

For more talented students, allowing them to test out of courses by proving proficiency earlier, can provide opportunities for students to complete more advanced courses and possibly enroll in college courses while in high school. This is an appropriate motivation for these students.

I am appreciative of the efforts and political insight to develop this modified proposal. It has enabled this once controversial topic to be viewed as possible by the majority, on both sides of the debate. Thank you.

Sincerely,

William D. Bailey  
Dean of Enrollment Management  
Clarion University of Pennsylvania

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**From:** William Bailey [wbailey@clarion.edu]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 20, 2009 9:59 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Subject:** Keystone Exams, Regulation Number 2692  
**Attachments:** Keystone exam letter 2009.docx

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

Please see attached letter.



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