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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
FINANCIAL COMMISSION

September 17, 2009

Honorable James R. Roebuck, Jr.
Chairman, House Education Committee
208 Irvis Office Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2188

Dear Chairman *Roebuck* Roebuck:

On September 10, 2009, we introduced House Resolution 456, in response to the request of many educational advocates, to prevent any further action or taxpayer dollars being spent on new high school graduation requirements. As you are aware, there is strong opposition to these proposed Keystone Exams, and we believe that these tests should not move forward until the concerns of the Legislature and our constituents have been addressed.

HR 456 has overwhelming support - currently cosponsored by **147** House Members. The Resolution was drafted with input from individual school board members, teachers, parents, grassroots volunteers and Members of the General Assembly - a true reflection of an open and democratic process.

The Resolution will ensure that we have the opportunity to represent the people who elected us and will allow us to fulfill our responsibilities as set forth in the Pennsylvania Constitution. The Governor has recognized that solutions to education policies and funding issues "must come from the lawmakers and the democratic pressures of those who elect them" in past court filings.

Furthermore, at a time when Pennsylvania is facing the worst economic times since the Great Depression, it is not fiscally responsible to expend hundreds of millions in taxpayer dollars for the implementation of an initiative with so many unanswered questions and legitimate concerns.

Our primary focus must be on educating our children by improving curriculum from kindergarten through grade 12, not just testing during the high school years.

Honorable James R. Roebuck, Jr.

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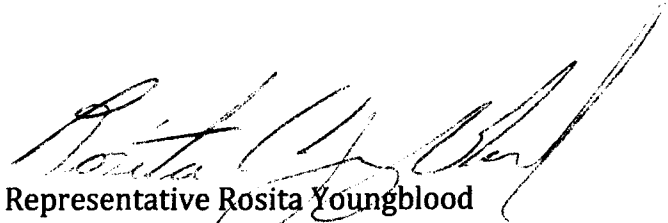
September 17, 2009

With overwhelming support for our resolution, we hope that you will allow the Committee to act on this legislation and provide answers and accountability to the people of this State.

Sincerely,



Representative Paul Clymer
House Education Committee, Minority Chairman
145th Legislative District



Representative Rosita Youngblood
House Education Committee, Member
198th Legislative District

cc: All Senate Members
All House Members
Ed Rendell, Governor of Pennsylvania
Dr. Gerald Zahorchak, Secretary of Education
Joe Torsella, Chair, State Board of Education
J. Whyatt Mondesire, President, NAACP Statewide Conference
Dr. Joan Duvall-Flynn, Education Chair, NAACP Statewide Conference
Tom Gentzel, Pennsylvania Boards of School Directors
Baruch Kintisch, Education Law Center
Arthur Coccodrilli, Chairman, Independent Regulatory Review Commission ✓
Michael Nutter, Mayor of Philadelphia
Dr. Arlene Ackerman, Superintendent, Philadelphia School District
Robert L. Archie Jr. Esq., Chairman, Philadelphia School Reform Commission