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**Buckheit, James****From:** elaine kocur [ekocur@hotmail.com]

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**Sent:** Wednesday, June 04, 2008 9:11 PM**To:** j buckheit@state.pa.usINDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

Mr. Buckheit,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the exit exam proposal being discussed in Harrisburg right now. Standardized testing has become excessive and resulted in the temptation to "teach to the test," while actually negatively impacting the amount of instructional time that could benefit students. Gauging student proficiency should not be reduced to tests which only measure ability in a vacuum and fail to consider all that students have attained over their twelve years of schooling. Some of the most successful people I know would not have passed ten standardized tests, and yet they still managed to attend college and achieve great success. What test can accurately measure the talents of our students? Why must we punish poor test takers who may be good at everything but taking high pressure standardized tests? Who can truly design a test that is fair to all students, especially considering all that would be at stake in this case? The fact of the matter is that testing has become a political football that is tossed around as part of campaign speeches and serves as a way of attempting to assign blame to schools whose students don't perform regardless of other factors, such as funding, parental involvement, community, etc., that may be overriding all the good that teachers in a given district may be striving to achieve. For a plan like this to even approach fairness, all schools must have access to the same resources, which is not realistic. I implore you to focus your energy on the right things. Improve the resources available to schools in need, so they have the materials and programs necessary to serve the students to the best of their ability.

Thank you for your time and attention in this matter.

Brian Kocur

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