

**Buckheit, James**

RECEIVED

**From:** D Johnston [blackecho47@netzero.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 04, 2008 12:29 PM  
**To:** j buckheit@state.pa.us  
**Cc:** jed.flynn@verizon.net; kwoert@comcast.net  
**Subject:** Proposed Chapter 4 Regulations Graduation Competency Assessments

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

**Subject:** Proposed Chapter 4 Regulations Graduation Competency Assessments

Dear Mr. Buckheit:

I am opposed to the proposed Chapter 4 Regulations on Graduation Competency Assessments that would prevent students of Pennsylvania from receiving a high school diploma based on the results of a standardized tests. Withholding the high school diploma is a cruel and permanent consequence that can not be revoked. To impose this harsh and punitive action on young people who will undoubtedly grow and develop over time is not only unfair, it is highly destructive to families, to communities, and to the commonwealth in general.

Based on the data currently available concerning the PSSA, the trauma of denying a high school diploma will disproportionately effect those students who are black, brown, and/or poor. Being forced to leave school without a diploma can potentially lock students into a permanent state of poverty. It has generational implications as poverty limits choice in housing and housing ownership, limits the capacity to access health insurance, limits access to further ones education and to educate ones children. That is most certainly a cruel and unusual punishment for not passing a test. The state of Pennsylvania, should not bring its power to bare against its children in such a permanently crippling way.

Moreover, it is unconscionable to lay the unspecified millions, possibly billions, of dollars of expense on the shoulders of the very tax payers whose children will suffer the life long debility of the withholding of a high school diploma.

Sincerely,

David Johnston  
322 North 2nd Street, #1204  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania