

**Buckheit, James**

**From:** Wythe Kever [wkeever@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 04, 2008 4:22 PM  
**To:** James Buckheit  
**Subject:** Oppose the GCA proposal!

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

Wythe Kever  
2212 Gorse Drive  
Harrisburg, PA 17110-9233

June 4, 2008

James Buckheit  
Executive Director, State Board of Education  
333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Dear James Buckheit:

As your constituent, I urge you to oppose the State Board of Education's proposed Graduation Competency Assessments. This proposal would mandate high-stakes standardized high school exit exams and would deny students a high school diploma if they do not score "proficient" on these statewide tests. There are numerous reasons I oppose the GCA proposal, but first and foremost I do not believe that standardized tests are the best determination of student achievement. The thought of denying students a high school diploma - which has long-term negative effects on their lives - because they didn't score "proficient" on a statewide test truly concerns me. At a time when we know that Pennsylvania's public education system lacks the funding it needs by over \$4 billion in order to help every student meet the state's academic standards, it is irresponsible to impose high-stakes testing on our students. In addition, no analysis has been done on the cost of developing and administering the GCAs, let alone what it would cost to remediate those students who do not score "proficient" on the exam. Please talk to your colleagues on the Education Committee and ask them to oppose the GCA proposal. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Wythe Kever  
717-574-5025