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June 16, 2008

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

2008 JUN 23 AM 10:13

RECEIVED

State Board of Education
c/o Mr. Jim Buckheit, Executive Director
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126-0333

Dear Members of the State Board of Education:

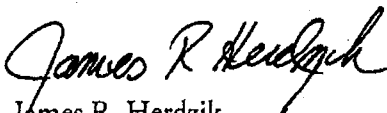
As Board President of a large urban school district, I write you on behalf of my Board of Directors in support of the Graduation Competency Assessments. It is critical that to better prepare students to meet real world job requirements, they must be competent in the content areas. Presently, the system allows the 501 districts to define graduation competencies differently.

The Graduation Competency Assessments would benefit all Pennsylvania's graduates by ensuring their diploma will have met the minimum skills required to compete in today's economy and/or continued education through college, etc. The Commonwealth needs to join other states that have put the interest of students over other special interests to ensure that a Pennsylvania high school diploma has meaning and merit. As a businessperson, our company is finding that incoming graduates with a high degree of skills and knowledge depend on where a student graduated from high school. It is time we give Pennsylvania's students a chance to succeed by embracing the Graduation Competencies Assessments.

I, along with others of my Board, encourage you to adopt the Graduation Competency Assessments to improve the quality of Pennsylvania's graduates no matter where they happen to attend high school.

Should any other information be helpful, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience. Your thoughtful consideration is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,


James R. Herdzik
President

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