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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

July 24, 2008

Janet L. Dolan, Director
Bureau of Driver Licensing
P.O. Box 68676
Harrisburg, PA 17106-8676

RE: Proposed Rule PA 4426, relating to 67 PA Code Ch 71

Dear Ms. Dolan:

I write to provide the comment of the American Diabetes Association on Proposed Rule PA 4426 relating to requirements and standards for school bus drivers that are being treated for diabetes mellitus.

The Association is a nationwide, nonprofit, voluntary health organization founded in 1940. It consists of people with diabetes, health professionals who treat people with diabetes, research scientists, and other concerned individuals. With over 400,000 general members, over 17,000 health professional members and over 3 million contributors, the Association is the largest non-governmental organization that deals with the treatment and impact of diabetes. The Association establishes, reviews, and maintains the most authoritative and widely followed clinical practice recommendations, guidelines, and standards for the treatment of diabetes. The Association also publishes the most authoritative professional journals concerning diabetes research and treatment.

The mission of the Association is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. This mission requires supporting a system that provides rigorous safety standards to protect commercial drivers with diabetes and the public, while not unduly denying people with diabetes the same rights granted to other Americans. The Association has long advocated for the adoption on the state and federal level of programs whereby each person with insulin-treated diabetes is afforded an individual assessment of his or her ability to be a commercial driver.

The Association submits this comment regarding Pennsylvania's proposed rules for bus drivers with diabetes because we believe certain aspects of the proposed rule do not allow for an individual assessment of each driver's ability to safely operate a school bus. Specifically, requiring an individual to submit proof of an average HbA1C of less than 8% does not measure driving safety. A1C values provide health care providers with important information about the effectiveness of an individual's treatment regimen, but are often misused in assessing whether an individual can safely perform a job. Hemoglobin A1C results are of no value in predicting short-term complications of diabetes, such as hypoglycemia, and thus have very limited use in evaluating individuals in licensing or employment situations.

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Alexandria, VA 22311
Tel: 703-549-1500

Diabetes Information
call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383)
online www.diabetes.org
The Association gratefully accepts gifts through your will.

The Mission of the American Diabetes Association is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

Although the Association recommends that A1C levels be kept below 7%, the purpose of this recommendation has nothing to do with the safety of an individual to currently perform tasks. Rather, this recommendation sets a target in order to lessen the chance of long-term complications of high blood glucose levels. An A1C cut off score is not medically justified in licensing or employment evaluations, and should never be considered a determinative factor in such evaluations. The Association therefore urges that Pennsylvania eliminate the proposed requirement to maintain an A1C under 8%.

Thank you for considering the Association's perspective.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John E. Anderson", followed by a horizontal line.

John E. Anderson, M.D.
Chairman, Advocacy Committee