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NORTHERN TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

NTIEC

P.O. Box 200
Dimock, PA 18816

November 5, 2013

The Honorable Silvan B. Lutkewitte, III
Chairman
Independent Regulatory Review Commission
333 Market St., 14th floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101
Email: irrc@irrc.state.pa.us

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RECEIVED
IRRC

Re: Final-Form Regulation #6-326 – Academic Standards and Assessments

Dear Chairman Lutkewitte:

As a member of the PA Workforce Investment Board and a recently retired P&G Engineering Manager, I am writing to express my strong support for final-form regulation #6-326, related to academic standards and assessments, and urge IRRC to approve the regulations.

Too many young people in Pennsylvania graduate from high school without the academic background to be successful in college or careers. The adoption of the more rigorous and internationally benchmarked Pennsylvania Core Standards, along with aligned assessments that include Keystone Exams, will help to ensure our high school graduates will have the academic foundation required to transition to postsecondary education or the workforce.

The regulation strikes the right balance between accountability and supports for struggling students. The regulation provides for supplemental instruction for students who do not demonstrate proficiency on the Keystone Exams, along with the opportunity to re-take the exam or a module of the exam. If the student is still unable to demonstrate proficiency on the Keystone Exam, he or she can move to a project-based assessment. There are also supports for teachers, such as voluntary model curriculum that is aligned to the PA Core Standards, computer diagnostic tools and professional development.

If adopted, the final-form regulation will make some common-sense changes to Pennsylvania's current regulation. It would replace the national Common Core State Standards with the Pennsylvania Core Standards, which are aligned to the Common Core but developed by Pennsylvania teachers. It would also reduce the number of Keystone Exams by half (from ten to

five) thus cutting testing time for students and reducing supplemental instruction requirements for school districts.

Again, I strongly support the final-form regulation and urge IRRC to approve it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. R. Butler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Peter" and last name "Butler" clearly distinguishable.

Peter R. Butler
Executive Director
NTIEC

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