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## House of Representatives

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Harrisburg

November 18, 2013

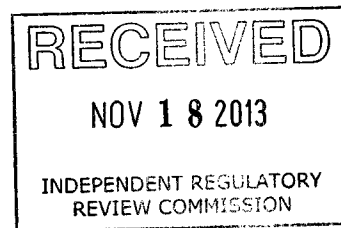
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Silvan B. Lutkewitte, III  
Chairperson  
Independent Regulatory Review Commission  
333 Market Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101



Dear Chairperson Lutkewitte:

As the Chairman of the House Education Committee, I write to convey my support for the Chapter 4 Final-Form Regulations proposed by the State Board of Education, which you will be considering in the upcoming IRRC meeting.

Although I hold the position of Chairman of the House Education Committee, I want to be clear from the outset that this letter of support is written on my own behalf, not on behalf of the entire House Education Committee or the House Republican Caucus.

Over time, I have given a great deal of consideration to my position on the proposed Chapter 4 Regulations. As Chairman, I conducted three informational briefings this session for the House Education Committee relating to the proposed regulations, and I also participated in countless discussions with superintendents, administrators, school board members, teachers, constituents, and other interested groups regarding the various elements of these regulations. At the conclusion of all these endeavors and my own private reflections, I arrived at a decision to support the proposed regulations for a number of reasons which I would like to share with you.

When the new Chapter 4 Regulations were initially proposed, many members of the Legislature heard concerns from their constituents and other interested groups about the component of the regulations dealing

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with the adoption of Pennsylvania Common Core Standards. In response to these concerns, the House of Representatives unanimously adopted House Resolution (HR) 338, which called upon the Secretary of Education and the State Board of Education to review their policies relating to the adoption of academic standards for K-12 education and to address a number of specific concerns highlighted in the resolution.

Prompted by HR 338, the State Board and the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) worked to revise the Chapter 4 regulations to clarify the following: that there will not be a required statewide curriculum or reading list; that national assessments will not be utilized, unless one is deemed necessary for special education students in consultation with parents, teachers, and other stakeholders; that these standards are applicable only to public schools, with private, religious, and home education students exempt; that PDE will not expand the collection of student data and will not collect personal family data due to the implementation of these standards.

Finally, the regulations were also amended to change the name of the standards to the Pennsylvania Core Standards to reflect the fact that these standards are not the national Common Core State Standards, but rather have been adapted to the Commonwealth's needs with input from Pennsylvania educators. The rapid and accommodating response by PDE and the State Board went a long way in assuaging my concerns and those of many other members of the House of Representatives.

In and of itself, the responsiveness of PDE and the State Board to HR 338 and the concerns of the Legislature brought me to a position of support for the Chapter 4 Regulations, but I also find myself supporting the regulations for more practical reasons.

Furthermore, failure to adopt these regulations will force Pennsylvania to move forward with the national Common Core State Standards adopted in 2010, with which many Pennsylvania legislators, education groups, and citizens have raised concerns, thus effectively discarding the laudable work done to create Pennsylvania specific standards. In addition, the new Chapter 4 Regulations eliminate mandates on school districts to complete and submit various strategic plans, consequently providing more flexibility in district planning.

Due to the reasons stated above, I firmly believe the proposed Chapter 4 Final-Form Regulations contain positive changes to the system

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of education in Pennsylvania, and I voted to approve the Chapter 4 Regulations at the State Board meeting on September 12<sup>th</sup>.

I strongly urge you to carefully consider the positive effects of these proposed regulations and support their implementation in your upcoming meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul I. Clymer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "P".

Paul I. Clymer, Chairman  
House Education Committee

PIC/erk