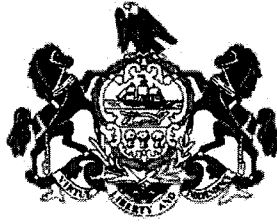


SETH GROVE, MEMBER
196TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

B-8 MAIN CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 202196
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2196
PHONE: (717) 783-2655

1954 CARLISLE ROAD, 1ST FLOOR
YORK, PA 17408
PHONE: (717) 767-3947
TOLL FREE: (800) 418-5041



House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

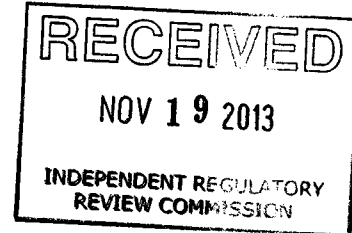
November 19, 2013

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Chairman Lutkewitte
Independent Regulatory Review Commission
333 Market Street, 14th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101



Dear Chairman Lutkewitte:

This letter is intended to express my support for the Independent Regulatory Review Commission's approval of the final-form regulations amending Chapter 4 (Education standards and assessments) adopted by the State Board of Education in September. Pennsylvania has had educational standards and assessments in the commonwealth for almost two decades. The State Board of Education is the regulatory body responsible for the development of standards and assessments in Pennsylvania and they have periodically reviewed and improved these regulations since their original adoption in the mid-1990s. The last revisions occurred in 2010 and the final-form regulations currently in front of the Independent Regulatory Review Commission are simply the most recent set of improvements to the existing regulations.

While some individuals oppose the adoption of these academic standards, their arguments have been unfounded. As a firm believer in our 10th amendment (states' rights) and an adamant opponent of the socialist doctrines of the Obama Administration, I would like to formally state these standards were developed by the states for the states. The federal government has not passed any law requiring states utilize any standards and even in the case of the federal government incentivizing states through grant programs, the Commonwealth of Virginia received Race to the Top Grants and did not implement Common Core Standards. This reaffirms this entire process has been a 10th amendment process.

Pennsylvania is NOT implementing Common Core Standards. Pennsylvania has had academic standards since 1999. These proposed academic standards in front of the commission took the best parts of our current academic standards and the 10th amendment developed Common Core Academic Standards to create the Pennsylvania Core Standards. These are Pennsylvania academic standards for Pennsylvania students. Furthermore, if these standards are not adopted, Pennsylvania will be forced to continue using the Common Core standards adopted in 2010 and not the Pennsylvania specific standards.

I support strong and rigorous educational standards and assessments to assure our public schools are producing career-and-college-ready students upon graduation from Pennsylvania's K-12 public school system. The current final-form regulations provide for rigorous standards and assessments that strengthen graduation requirements. These regulations have been worked on for several years by the State Board of Education, the PA Department of Education, legislators, and educators from across the commonwealth and many other stakeholders.

As a member of the House Education Committee, this committee held several public hearings over the last year on this issue. As a result of these discussions, the PA House of Representatives passed House Resolution 338 in June calling for several changes to the regulations, including:

- Protections assuring against mandated reading lists or statewide curriculum
- Assurances that new data collections will not result from the regulations
- Restrictions from the commonwealth participating in national tests
- Clarification the standards are not mandated on private schools or home-schooled children

While these changes were part of the original draft regulations, the State Board added clarifying language to ensure they were highlighted and directly mentioned in the draft regulations before the commission today.

I am pleased to report the State Board of Education addressed all of these issues, along with other concerns, in the current final-form regulations. For these reasons and others, I support final approval of this regulatory package.

Sincerely,



Seth Grove
State Representative
196th District