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PA. STATE BOARD
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Independent Regulatory
Review Commission

APPOINTMENT
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND HOUSING
EDUCATION
GOVERNMENT REFORM
HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES
PARKS

June 23, 2021

Karen Molchanow, Executive Director
PA State Board of Education Board
333 Market Street, 1st Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126

RE: Retention of 2002 PA Public Environment, Ecology and Agriculture

Dear Ms. Molchanow and PA State Board of Education Members:

I am writing as a member of Allegheny County Council to urge the PA Department of Education to include the subjects of environment, ecology, and agriculture in its proposed science education standards. I believe it is imperative for students of all ages to understand the importance of protecting our state's environment and our state's number one industry, agriculture.

Since the new proposed education standards eliminate all mention of "environment, ecology and agriculture" for some age groups, I am concerned that teachers may not be able to engage students in meaningful natural resource discussions and relevant, real world learning.

Very specifically, the proposed secondary science standards have four domains, and because none of them include the subjects critical to understanding Pennsylvania's ecosystems, middle or high school teachers may not include natural resource protection in their education curriculum. The inclusion of specific standards for environment, ecology, and agriculture as a fifth domain would allow for the integration of meaningful natural resource educational experiences. More importantly, PA needs to prepare our students for future careers in the fields of environment and agriculture, which may not happen as the proposed science education standards are currently written.

Again, I urge the PA Department of Education to include environment, ecology, and agriculture in all science education standards prior to publication in the PA Bulletin. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Anita Prizio