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**House of Representatives**  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

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CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES  
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MEMBER, JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION  
ON REAL PROPERTY  
MEMBER, JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION  
ON STROKE PREVENTION

March 13, 2009

Dear Community Leader:

Our office is writing to update you on significant events surrounding the School District of Philadelphia's proposal to close William Penn High School at the end of the 2009-2010 school year. In February the School District introduced a proposal to close William Penn High School at the end of next school year. The School District states that 641 students are attending William Penn High school during the 2008-09 school year. The transition plan dictates that William Penn will not take any new students after the current school year. Only the present 11<sup>th</sup> grade class would remain at William Penn for the 2009-2010 school year. The current 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade class will be offered places at the 43 comprehensive and/or city-wide high schools. Feeder schools have been established. Students attending Clymer would attend Simon Gratz and students from Dunbar, Ferguson, Harrison and Hartranft would go to Benjamin Franklin High School. The School District held a community meeting at William Penn High School on March 9, 2009 about the closure plans. The District plans to hold another community meeting in March. On March 11, 2009, the School District presented its proposal to close William Penn to the School Reform Commission (SRC) and received testimony from the public regarding the proposal. The District's proposal regarding the William Penn closure is on the District's Website at: <http://www.philasd.org/>. The SRC will vote on the proposal to close William Penn on June 17, 2009. For the next 90 days, through June 16, 2009, the SRC will accept comments and testimony from the public about the William Penn closure plan.

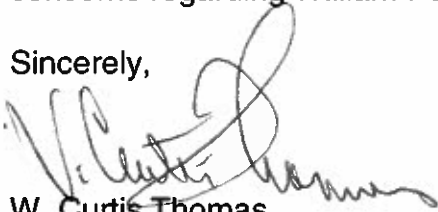
My office worked with community residents and community based organizations to disseminate information about the District's proposal. I joined with community groups to organize a rally on March 2, 2009 opposing District's actions regarding William Penn. In addition, I held a press conference on March 5, 2009 speaking against the closure proposal. I have attached testimony I presented at the March 9, 2009 School Reform Commission hearing regarding the District's plans to close William Penn. In the coming weeks, I will be convening a community meeting to update and inform residents about the closure plans. In addition, I will be posting information about the William Penn situation on my state Website to [www.pahouse.com/thomas](http://www.pahouse.com/thomas).

I encourage you to get involved and submit your comments and letters about the William Penn closure plan to the School District Office of Communications. Letters can be sent to:

Barbara Farley  
School District of Philadelphia  
Office of Communications  
440 N. Broad Street, Suite 102  
Philadelphia, PA 19130

Please feel free to contact me or Allison Acevedo of my office with any questions or concerns regarding William Penn High School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Curtis Thomas', written over a light blue horizontal line.

W. Curtis Thomas  
State Representative  
181<sup>st</sup> Legislative District