I wonder if you really

know how important each and everyone of you is to this process which affects each citizen of this Commonwealth.

As alumni of the State System of Higher Education, you are part of a group numbering over 350,000 nationally. Nearly 260,000 alumni still reside in Pennsylvania. A State System alumnus can be found in 49 of 50 states in this country.

When you consider your collective strength and investment in this Commonwealth, it is apparent that your influence on the legislative process can be equally large. The legislative process is designed to foster participation. Legislators serve on committees which address broad policy areas such as labor and

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industry, conservation, education, and many others. It is
difficult to constantly understand the many issues that this
state is confronted with, let alone all the special interests
which are affected. WE RELY on good people, such as yourselves,
to help us represent you effectively and equitably.

You have the knowledge that many legislators may not. It is unfortunate that legislators cannot be "all-knowing", but we are human beings expected to make very responsible decisions, many times with limited information.

I have spent a lifetime in the profession of education, both as practitioner and as legislator serving on the House Education

Committee. Throughout this experience the one theme that seems to constantly be advanced is that of educational reform.

I am convinced as I look to the future of our nation and our state, that reform -- at least reform in delivery of instruction is necessary. Our economy will force us to look at ways of achieving efficiency in delivery. Out standards will not allow this efficiency to reduce progress, or gains made on test scores, etc. We face a real challenge.

This is where you as alumni and practicing educators need to be heard. You need to communicate with your local legislators to help them learn and understand what works and does not in your schools and universities.

You need to communicate with the members of the education and appropriations committees to let them know your views on to voice your support for initiatives before them. You need

funding for your university system and for those special line item appropriations which keep the State System on the cutting edge of new educational initiatives and an enhanced liberal arts education.

The Pennsylvania Council of Again, we need to hear from you. Alumni Associations, PCAA, is beginning to organize its

collective influence. Together, the State System alumni can

make a difference.

hope you will continue to work with your respective university alumni association, PCAA, and keep aware of the State System of Higher Education family news -- a family of which you are now a

member.

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