

Written testimony provided by

Maurice E. Flurie, III, Ed.D.

CEO, Commonwealth Connections Academy

To House State Government Committee

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Good Morning Chairman Metcalfe, Chairwoman Josephs and members of the Committee. I am Maurice Flurie, CEO of Commonwealth Connections Academy Cyber Charter School. I want to thank you for the opportunity to present to the members of this committee in support of Royce Black and his effort to have Celestite designated as the State mineral for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

We are here today due to the mission of a very motivated 13 year-old, 7th grade student. As you have observed he demonstrates a maturity and motivation beyond that of a typical student of his age. Today you will also hear from experts in geosciences and meteorology. I humbly submit that I am not one of those experts. My doctoral work leaves me ill qualified to speak to the merits of Celestite beyond what I have learned from the young man whose efforts are the reason for our assembly today. However, what I can speak about with some authority is Royce and our school.

Commonwealth Connections Academy (CCA) Cyber Charter School is very proud of Royce and the initiative he has demonstrated in this endeavor. To us he embodies what all public education institutions should strive to accomplish. We want to be a supportive and nurturing environment that provides motivated and inquisitive students like Royce the opportunity to develop his or her individual strengths and pursue academic passions. We are glad that the flexibility and support provided by our program afforded him the time to engage in this pursuit that brings us to today's hearing. The entire process undertaken by Royce, involved scientific research, field study, written correspondence, outreach to

legislators and writing testimony. One would be hard pressed to design a better multi-disciplinary educational experience integrating Science, English and Civics. What makes this even more impressive is that all of this was independently initiated and brought to fruition by Royce.

All experienced educators have stories of students that impacted him or her professionally. On many occasions I have had the opportunity to provide testimony in front of various House and Senate Committees in both our great Commonwealth and a few of our neighboring states. Royce being here today in support of your proposal is one experience that this lifelong educator will remember fondly. To the Chairmen, members of the Committee and especially Royce, thank you for this opportunity.

I intended to leave my remarks short so as to allow ample time for specific questions for the experts providing testimony. I again want to thank the committee for this opportunity and will entertain any questions.