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March 22, 2012

The Honorable Wes Keller
Chairman, Health and Social Services
State Capitol, Room 432
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: SB 98

Scheduled for Hearing in the House Health and Social Services Committee on March 27, 2012

Dear Representative Keller:

I am writing to confirm that the College Board does not require fingerprinting for SAT takers. The College Board is the organization that owns the SAT and determines test security policy for the SAT. We subcontract test security administration to ETS, a separate corporation. They simply enforce our policy. Attached is a listing of acceptable SAT identification.

The purpose of this letter is to address the misconceptions that have come to our attention about identification procedures for students taking the SAT. I am referring to an ad placed in the February 28, 2012 edition in "The Frontiersman," by the Citizens for Privacy in Alaska. As the "firm giving the SAT exam," I can assure you the following statement in the ad is totally false:

The Wall Street Journal even exposed that the firm giving the SAT exam has considered requiring children to submit their biometrics/fingerprints to a national biometric database "as ID" or they will be denied the opportunity to take the SAT...and thus denied the ability to attend most colleges.

As a mission-driven organization, the College Board is committed to ensuring that every student has the opportunity to pursue higher education. We have no intention of instituting any policies or procedures that might discourage a student from pursuing his or her college dreams. The College Board was created and exists to this day to create opportunity, not barriers, for young men and women to connect to and succeed in college. Please be assured that finger printing is not under consideration as a potential test security enhancement.

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We are also aware of a hearing that took place in New York State in January, 2012, and a biometrics specialist who testified. The article in the New York Times states:

While the new security measures represent a change of tone for College Board and Educational Testing Service officials who previously insisted their system was adequate, some superintendents and principals said they did not go far enough. These officials have called for fingerprinting students, increasing stipends for proctors and imposing real consequences on those who cheat.

This article has been misinterpreted by Alaska Citizens for Privacy. The officials who attended the hearing in New York State and “called for fingerprinting students” were public school superintendents and principals. They were in no way representing the College Board or ETS, nor were they SAT security policy makers. Requiring fingerprinting for the SAT was not supported by Republicans or Democrats attending the legislative hearing in New York State. The concept was immediately dismissed.

We are also aware of a Wall Street Journal article:

*The bill also calls for photo identification and other ways to prove the test taker matches the name on the test. Other **potential** test security measures include fingerprinting and retinal scans.*

This article was referring to the GMAT which is not a College Board exam. The GMAT is used for admission to graduate school. College Board exams are exclusively for transition from high school to college.

We do not require fingerprinting nor would we support a bill that does.

Sincerely,

Kris Zavoli
Senior Director, State Government Relations

Attachment: Acceptable SAT Photo ID