

## Testimony Regarding HB 2680

Chair Doherty and Members of the House Education Committee,

I wrote testimony on this bill two weeks ago and was allowed ninety seconds to focus my message for you in public testimony on February 9. I understand this is protocol, but I feel like it is not ample time for “experts” in the field of education to state their cases fully. Additionally, Deputy Superintendent, Rob Saxton, spoke at length that day, presented misleading information and failed to stay to listen to public testimony. This would seem to be backwards. Teachers in the classroom are often the most knowledgeable regarding educational issues (but have the smallest voice.)

Once again, I submit testimony on HB2680. As a social studies teacher, I understand the necessity of compromise and I endorse your attempt to mitigate the more punitive aspects of the testing mandates. I do like clause 2A: “Evaluate whether the assessment accurately measures student learning”. That clause must exist because legislators are starting to listen to the concerns of teachers, and most educators believe no test can give even a partial picture of student learning. (How I would like to be the fly on the wall watching that messy evaluative process play itself out.) I wonder what kind of crazy metrics might have to be cooked up in order to come to a conclusion (one way or the other) regarding the efficacy of the test? Surely there is a fiscal impact (measured by human labors involved in this process)?

As my previous testimony indicated, I object to clauses like, “Analyze student learning gaps; and identify adjustments in instruction necessary to address student learning gaps.” Why do I object? Because it simultaneously validates the existence of the so-called Smarter Balanced tests and, will surely create new bureaucratic mandates – especially when the law goes through the Oregon Department of Education. And, as a teacher, I identify adjustments in instruction on a daily basis – without having a law telling me to do so. That is my job.

I know that there is no institutional way to turn back the rollout of the SB test this year, but legislators need to know that the lengthy nature of the test, the technology requirements and the ODE mandate that high schools must have completed 80% of their curriculum by testing time has really created a hardship for schools. The Smarter Balanced tests will bump up against AP tests (much more important to students) and school finals (which, for many teachers, are authentic, comprehensive, project and performance based). English and Math teachers will be punished (as they will likely be forced to give up class time for these tests).

Teachers are burned out by the bureaucratic overlay of federal and state mandates in our profession. Those mandates (manifested in laws and administrative rules) are sucking the joy from the job. They reveal a national disrespect for the teaching profession. The final insult is that the new testing regime being foisted upon school districts (in the name of national standards) is being promulgated by educational profiteers.

I repeat my previous request: Would you throw down the challenge to legislative member to take the Smarter Balance tests yourselves? It would put you in unique positions to judge.

Respectfully yours,

Laura Paxson Kluthe  
Lake Oswego teacher

