

Submitter: Scott Hays  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure: HB4124

Honorable Members of the House Committee on Education

I write in support of HB 4124.

I am a retired public school teacher who ended my career a half decade into the NCLB era. I must add, parenthetically, that I retired early ... in large measure because my students were, even then, being subjected to a plethora of tests over which I had no control or input and that significantly altered our instructional sequence (not for the better) without seeming to serve any useful purpose, whatsoever, other than make some politicians feel like they were holding someone "accountable" (and, of course, make many textbook publishers exceptionally wealthy). I might also add that the pressure put on teachers to help their students perform well on the tests directly reduced, and in some cases eliminated, the teaching of "non-essential" content ... particularly in the subjects of science and history.

Testing, of course, has only become more entrenched and more widespread than it was fifteen years ago. Tragically, there is little interest in the effect of this testing, or (perhaps more importantly) whether it is having any effect on learning. But we cannot begin to address issues associated with testing without better understanding, through complete audits and careful analysis, exactly how much and what kind of testing is taking place. No one seems to really know exactly how many tests are being administered, who develops each of the tests, or how much it is costing districts to administer and score the tests (in terms of both money and instructional time). Parents, taxpayers, the community and certainly state legislators have a right to know exactly what is happening and to have answers to these questions.

HB 4124 provides a starting point for every district to begin that process. Armed with useful information, we might be able to begin to answer the question, "When is testing too much?" That, in turn, might open the door to exploring different, and better ways, to assess academic growth and achievement.