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On Behalf Of: SB1583
Committee: House Committee On Education
Measure: SB1583

In 2015 at a community forum at North Eugene H.S., I heard then-Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction Rob Saxton describe Oregon's state assessment system as a "3-legged stool" -- standardized, interim, and formative. This metaphor implied equal weight to all three types of assessment, but during the Q&A portion, I challenged this by saying that standardized testing is a giant tree stump of a leg, interim is a semi-thick leg, and formative assessment as a spindly toothpick - a very unbalanced system.

Since then I have spoken with over 50 legislators, a half-dozen local school board members, several State Board of Education directors, and officials at the ODE about the need for a more balanced assessment system. None of the above officials has expressed the need for more standardized assessments; in fact, all have agreed on fewer in order to achieve the elusive balance. But so far none of them have acted on doing anything to reduce standardized testing to increase classroom-based formative assessments.

This Bill takes action: it will reduce the time - and the clout - of the commercially purchased Smarter Balanced standardized spring summative assessments which will open the dialogue on what other types of assessments educators, administrators, parents, and students need to determine academic progress.