

Columbus Office

Vern Riffe Center
77 S. High Street
12th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-6111
(614) 644-5076
Rep55@ohiohouse.gov
www.ohiohouse.gov



Gayle L. Manning
State Representative

Commerce & Labor, Chair
Correctional Institution
Inspection Committee
Higher Education
Primary & Secondary Education
Transportation & Public Safety

Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Jones, Ranking Member Robinson, and members of the House Primary and Secondary Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity for my joint sponsor and me to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 239, the Testing Reduction Act.

House Bill 239 will reduce the state-mandated standardized tests to the federal minimums by eliminating four end of course exams: Geometry, ELA I, American History, and American Government. Additionally, it would require school districts to convene a local work group to examine district required testing, require that ODE annually issue a report on the time spend on state and district required testing in Ohio's schools, and, lastly, it would provide that the state continues to offer a paid administration of the ACT/SAT for high schools juniors, but student participation would be voluntary.

During my 37 years in an elementary school classroom, I experienced first-hand how stressful standardized testing can be for students. In order to prepare students for the standardized test, teachers often give local diagnostic assessments. I believe so much weight is placed on a score of a standardized test, and creativity in the classroom is dwindling. Every student is different and not every student will excel on a standardized test. The standards will still be taught even if there is no state assessment in the subject.

The state standards will still be taught if these assessments are eliminated. SB 165 of the 129th General Assembly, which became law in 2012, required the State Board of Education to incorporate into the state social studies standards, for grades 4 to 12, academic content regarding the original texts of the Declaration of Independence, Northwest Ordinance, U.S. Constitution, and Ohio Constitution. Teachers will still incorporate the material into lessons since it is part of the state standards.

Eliminating the mentioned four assessments would save the state millions. From information received from the Ohio Department of Education, the cost savings would be as follows: Eliminating Geometry would save \$1.1 million, eliminating ELA I would save approximately \$1.6 million, and eliminating both social studies assessments would net \$2.4 million in savings. The projected cost of the ACT/SAT is \$5.25 million. The amount of cost savings that could be gained would depend on the number of students who opt out of taking either test. These savings would be huge for the state and could be used to invest in other areas of education.

This legislation reduces state-required testing and provides for local stakeholders to examine testing requirements at the district level while maintaining local control. Parents continue to be vocal that they want less testing, and this legislation makes strides towards that ask. I thank you for the opportunity to testify, and at the conclusion of Representative Crawley's testimony, we will be happy to entertain any questions you may have.