



TEXANS ADVOCATING FOR MEANINGFUL STUDENT ASSESSMENT

PRESS RELEASE

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Texans Advocating for Meaningful Student Assessment (TAMSA)

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Yesterday, the Texas House of Representatives passed HB 515, a bill that some claim decreases standardized testing for Texas public school students. Ms. Theresa Trevino, President of Texans Advocating for Meaningful Student Assessment (TAMSA), stated on May 3rd after the vote: "TAMSA applauds Rep. VanDeaver-R for his effort to reduce standardized testing in Texas, however, we far preferred the original version of the bill (HB 515) that eliminated all testing not required under federal law." She said these include the 8th grade STAAR social studies test, writing tests in 4th, 7th, 9th and 10th grades, and end of course high school exams for U.S. History and English II.

"The final bill, while promoted as eliminating two tests, instead exchanges U.S. History EOC for a civics exam and eliminates only the social studies test in 8th grade. While the bill does make progress by eliminating the need for 5th and 8th graders to retake English and math tests if they do not meet standards, the Texas STAAR testing system would still make students take 6 more tests than are mandated by ESSA. "

Additionally, TAMSA has serious concerns about the version of HB 515 that the House passed on Wednesday.

"We do not support a statewide implementation of the writing pilot in 2021 which is timed, high stakes, and will likely add more tests to an already onerous system. TAMSA favors a portfolio approach to writing, but not graded by the state and not required for promotion or graduation," Trevino said.

"We will continue to work with Rep. VanDeaver and others in the coming months on further test reduction and removal of high stakes on all students in the coming sessions."

TAMSA is a statewide, grassroots organization comprised of parents and other community members concerned with the overemphasis on high stakes STAAR tests and the misallocation of hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to the tests that should be going to the classroom. Our mission is to improve public education in Texas through the use of meaningful and effective student assessments that allow for more productive classroom instruction and more efficient use of public funds.