

Submitter: Scott Hays  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure: SB1572

#### House Education Committee Members

I write in support of SB 1583. As a retired middle school teacher of language arts, history and science, I value the importance of assessment. A little known fact about teachers is that at least half of our professional activity involves assessment, both formal and informal, and a large part of what we actually teach is based on what we learn from those assessments. Of greatest value – both for myself and for my students – were the assessments that I designed myself or that were provided with the instructional materials I used in the classroom. These were connected directly to work being done in the classroom and provided instant formative and summative information.

As a student myself, and throughout most of my professional career, I took or administered a single standardized achievement test over the course of a year. That test measured only what it claimed to measure – academic achievement. We understood the test and the reported results, and we could report the meaning of those results quite clearly to parents (and to students, when appropriate). Instructional time needed to administer the tests was well-worth it. Today, of course, the academic year is littered with required standardized tests (federal, state and locally mandated). Each test eats into and interrupts valuable instructional time, while the results of the tests contribute little (if any) information to guide instruction. Tragically, if one believes outcomes reported by the NAEP (commonly referred to as "The Nation's Report Card"), very little of this increasing testing regimen has been translated into improved student academic achievement over the last 20 years.

Lastly, I am sure you on this committee are well aware that this bill does not eliminate testing or accountability, as large numbers of those who oppose SB 1583 assert is the case. We all acknowledge that it is essential to assess the academic achievement of students in the state of Oregon. It's just that I and a growing number of residents believe the effort to accumulate data has grown excessive. It is time to take a deep breath and ask some hard questions about the effectiveness and appropriateness of multiple tests, administered throughout the year, without any apparent rhyme or reason or any specific applications to the teaching/learning process. SB 1583 does not do that, specifically. But it does provide a time out from the testing mania while providing an opportunity to take a deep dive into the entire testing system and still meet the minimum federal requirements in the hope, perhaps, of restoring balance to the idea of accountability. Please move SB 1583 forward and

help pass it in this legislative session. Thank you.