



May 22, 2001

Federally Mandated Testing

Current Law:

The Improving America's Schools Act approved by the Democratically controlled Congress in 1994 and signed into law by President Clinton mandated that states annually test students in reading and math in at least one grade in each of three grade ranges (3-5, 6-9, and 10-12). Implementation of these tests was to begin in the 2000-2001 school year, with a possible one-year waiver. The following is the compliance status as of January 19, 2001:

In Compliance (11):	Delaware, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Wyoming
Largely Complete / One-Year Waiver (14):	Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Maine, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota
Changes Required (6):	Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas, Washington
Asked to Enter Compliance Agreement (3):	California, West Virginia, Wisconsin
Application Incomplete or Pending (16):	Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Utah

H.R. 1:

H.R. 1 proposes to expand the federal mandate by requiring testing annually in grades 3-8 and additional test of sample students in grades 4 and 8.

Costs:

In Fiscal Year 2001, before the full implementation of the 1994 mandate, states spent in total \$423 million on state assessments.

Concerns:

- Some Members may be concerned about passing a new testing mandate when currently only half of the states are even ready to begin implementing the much more limited testing mandate approved over six years ago.
- Some Members believe it may be prudent to determine the impact of the current mandate on educational achievement, classroom instruction, etc. before expanding the mandate.
- In addition, recent reports in the *New York Times* and other sources regarding a lack of resources for test administration and scoring has raised concerns about the ability to implement a successful and accurate testing system with the resources currently available. (See: "Right Answer, Wrong Score" in the May 20, 2001 *New York Times*)