

Written Testimony of Bob Popinski
Director of Policy
Raise Your Hand Texas

Before the House Public Education Committee
The Honorable Dan Huberty, Chair
April 9, 2019

House Bill 4242 by Representative Diego Bernal
Position: For

KEY POINTS

- Texas students, schools and communities deserve an objective evaluation of whether the state assessment used as the foundation for our accountability system is fair.
 - We support HB 4242 because it requires the resolution of serious questions surrounding the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness and is necessary to restore public confidence in the test.
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Chairman Huberty and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 4242 and the importance of fairness and transparency in our public school accountability system. Raise Your Hand Texas supports fair accountability for student performance in Texas. Student assessments provide an essential foundation for our accountability system by measuring whether our students master the state curriculum. Any school accountability system requires public confidence in the fairness and transparency of the assessment used, which in this case is the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). We support HB 4242 because it requires the resolution of serious questions surrounding the STAAR and is necessary to restore public confidence in the test.

Three different academic studies dating back to 2012 have questioned whether the STAAR is readable on grade level. Each found a persistent level of readability several grades above the grade tested. A test that covers the state curriculum must be readable by the student to accurately measure that student's performance. The type of review required by HB 4242 would reassure our communities that their students and schools receive fair evaluations.

We strongly support the Legislature requiring an objective assessment of whether the STAAR is fair to our students, teachers, and communities. Regardless of whether such a review finds the tests valid, we will all benefit from the resolution of the readability questions raised about the test.

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