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H.547

Introduced by Representatives Wood of Waterbury, Brumsted of Shelburne,
Burrows of West Windsor, Coffey of Guilford, Harrison of
Chittenden, Houghton of Essex, McFaun of Barre Town,
Mulvaney-Stanak of Burlington, Pajala of Londonderry, and
Small of Winooski

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Education; public schools; standardized assessments; exemption

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to permit a
public school student's parent or legal guardian to request that the student be
exempted from taking any statewide standardized assessment.

An act relating to exempting students from standardized assessments in
public schools

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 914 is added to read:

§ 914. EXEMPTION FROM STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS IN

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(a) Exemption. Upon the written request of a public school student's
parent or legal guardian, a school district shall exempt the student from taking

1 any statewide standardized assessment. When determining the percentage of
2 students who performed at designated proficiency levels on a statewide
3 standardized assessment, a school district shall consider only the students
4 participating in the assessment and shall exclude from consideration those
5 students who were exempted from taking the assessment.

6 (b) No penalty. A school district shall not penalize any exempted student
7 nor shall the Agency of Education or the State Board of Education penalize
8 any school district for a lower assessment participation rate. A school district
9 shall not prohibit an exempted student from participating in an activity or
10 receiving any other form of reward that recognizes participation in
11 assessments.

12 (c) Exemption form. The Agency of Education shall develop and maintain
13 a form to be used by school districts, shared by districts directly with families,
14 and signed by the parent or legal guardian of any student exempted from the
15 assessment. The Agency of Education shall translate the form into such non-
16 English languages as it deems appropriate to enable its use. The form shall
17 have at least an explanation of the:

18 (1) right of a parent or guardian to exempt the student from
19 taking a statewide assessment; and

20 (2) purpose and value of statewide assessments.

1 (d) Alternative educational opportunity. The school district shall provide
2 an appropriate alternative educational activity for the time period during which
3 the assessment is administered. The alternative activity shall be agreed upon
4 by the school district and the parent or legal guardian of the student.

5 (e) Privacy. The name of the parent or legal guardian and any specific
6 reasons disclosed to school officials for the objection to the assessment shall
7 not be public information and shall be excluded from access 1 V.S.A. chapter
8 5, subchapter 3 (access to public records and documents).

9 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

10 This act shall take effect on passage.