

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 491

By Tracy

A RESOLUTION to express Tennessee's sovereignty over education standards and assessments.

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the State of Tennessee states that “The State of Tennessee recognizes the inherent value of education and encourages its support”; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee recognizes the need for high education standards; and

WHEREAS, a strong public education system is critical to the future of Tennessee as our students must be proficient in basic subjects such as reading, writing, and math to become free and critical thinking individuals, live a life of enlightenment, succeed in post-secondary education, secure quality employment or create individual wealth; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee businesses must be able to hire qualified, highly-skilled workers in order to thrive and as such, our prosperity as a state and as individual people and enterprises is dependent on excellent educational outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has granted the power to set curricula and define learning standards for students in Tennessee’s public schools to the State Board of Education and local boards of education; and

WHEREAS, Tennesseans will not accept Federal government intrusion into the academic standards that are taught to our students in our classrooms and will not tolerate the Federal government using such standards to coerce policy decisions at the state or local level on the issues of assessments, curriculum, and instructional materials; and

WHEREAS, the Federal government has no constitutional right to determine how children in the State of Tennessee will be educated; no standard or curriculum shall be imposed on Tennessee by the Federal government; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee, not the Federal government or any other organization, shall determine the content of Tennessee's state academic standards; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee, not the Federal government or any other organization, shall choose the statewide assessments that will measure how well students have mastered such academic standards; and

WHEREAS, no Constitutional right of the children of Tennessee and their families shall be violated through any type of overreach by the Federal government into any facet of Tennessee's educational system; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that the State of Tennessee is solely and exclusively responsible for setting the educational standards for the children of Tennessee and determining the assessment methodology to be used to measure student performance and shall not accept any imposition of educational standards, assessment methodology, or any overreach in student data collection or access by the Federal government or any other organization.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.