

STATE SENATOR • MICKEY SWITALSKI • 10TH DISTRICT

# Switalski Press Release



P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-7315 • Fax: 517-373-3126  
E-mail: [senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov) • [www.senate.mi.gov/switalski](http://www.senate.mi.gov/switalski)

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Contact: Sen Mickey Switalski  
Phone: (517) 373-7315

## **Switalski, Jelinek to introduce school budget reforms**

*Measures would save an estimated \$25 million annually*

LANSING—The state could save \$25 million in testing costs each year under legislation set to be introduced next week by state Sens. Ron Jelinek and Mickey Switalski, the ranking Republican and Democratic members on the Senate Appropriations Committee. The bills would give local schools more control over testing by reducing state requirements for certain tests and eliminating duplicate tests.

“We want to move towards a standardized test used nationwide, so Michigan can measure itself against school systems in other states,” said Switalski (D-Roseville). “I believe we will excel in that comparison and thus attract people to this state.”

The eleven-bill package includes a variety of measures that will cut costs for school testing while still allowing schools to meet the examination requirements laid out by the federal No Child Left Behind law. Currently, the state requires more testing than is necessary to fulfill national guidelines.

“These measures are an effort by both parties to save the state money while ensuring its ability to fund these standardized tests,” said Jelinek (R-Three Oaks). “We need to meet the national requirements without placing undue burden on our teachers. Working in a bipartisan fashion will allow us to scrutinize the teeniest details to ensure the greatest savings.”

In addition to eliminating Michigan’s extra testing requirements, this package of bills streamlines online practice tests, removes the state’s obligation to fund test retakes if a student takes them more than once, and cancels the requirement that the Michigan Department of Education create its own end-of-course examination assessment tool.

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