WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to express our grave concerns and those of our constituents about the unfairness of testing during the 2020-2021 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic; specifically, testing that will begin on March 15, 2021; and

WHEREAS, When COVID-19 hit a year ago, businesses, churches, and schools, to name a few, closed; it was devastating to business owners, consumers, and families; students, in particular, have been negatively affected in many ways, both in and out of the classroom; very limited teaching and learning took place during the 4th quarter of the 2019-2020 school year; in some areas, students have had no access to computers or the internet; consequently, these students have been learning very little and, in some cases, nothing; and

WHEREAS, At this point in the 2020-2021 school year, some districts have offered hybrid learning; some are fully in-person; some are fully remote; some are a combination; even a year after the onset of COVID-19 restrictions, school districts everywhere are still trying to determine the safest method for teaching their students; and
WHEREAS, There are several concerns if standardized testing proceeds during this school year, including the validity of the test results and the fairness of test scores to mark the students' success and to determine teachers' accountability; we have seen no valid reason for testing under these circumstances; and

WHEREAS, Some other testing options have been discussed; one is for students to be tested on Saturdays; another is for testing to take place in the month of June; a third option is for students to be tested in the fall of 2021 as well as in the spring of 2022; two standardized testing sessions in one school year for students who may be returning to a "normal" school year would be overwhelming; again, none of these accommodations truly accommodate the children; and

WHEREAS, Parents have told us that their children are struggling just to complete homework that, in some cases, is extremely excessive; on top of learning the lessons being taught and then doing homework, they are experiencing Zoom fatigue due to the dependence of using the video platform to learn; parents and teachers alike are very distressed by the decision to still test; and

WHEREAS, Students across the United States are being taught in the most widely diverse methods that we adults have
ever known; they are already traumatized by all of the above-mentioned situations; they are experiencing enough stress by what is going on in our world; they do not need the stress of test taking for which many have not had appropriate exposure to the content being tested; although their education has been dramatically changed, the tests have not, nor is there time to rewrite and standardize them; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we request the U.S. Department of Education exempt Illinois schools from taking the state mandated standardized tests in the spring of 2021; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be delivered to the U.S. Department of Education.