

# EXHIBIT 31



May 7, 2001

The Honorable  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

I am writing on behalf of the American Psychological Association (APA) in support of three amendments that will be offered by Senator Paul Wellstone during debate on S. 1, the Better Education for Students and Teachers Act. Senator Wellstone's amendments modify and clarify provisions relating to the use of tests and state assessments under the bill in an effort to ensure that the new testing provisions have the positive effects that the United States Senate intends. We encourage you to cosponsor these amendments and to support them when offered to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act during Senate floor consideration.

With 155,000 members and affiliates, APA is the largest association of psychologists in the world, and strives to advance psychology as a science, a profession, and a means of promoting human welfare. Psychologists have unique expertise to lend to policy discussions involving educational and psychological testing. Psychological scientists developed the first intelligence tests, educational achievement and ability measures, and personnel selection instruments. They continue to be at the forefront of assessment technology, and remain committed to the fair and appropriate use of tests, particularly in high-stakes situations with significant consequences for individuals.

APA's policy positions on testing questions are anchored by the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (1999), which is widely recognized as an authoritative document on test development and use. Co-developed with the American Educational Research Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education, the *Standards* has been adopted by the U.S. Department of Education, cited in policy guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and frequently relied upon in legal cases related to educational and employment testing.

Senator Wellstone's amendments on state assessments would ensure that states adhere to quality assurances when developing and implementing the new assessments required under S.1. One amendment would require that assessments meet the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (1999) and would offer grant support to States to develop assessments that are high quality and include multiple measures of student achievement. A second amendment would ensure that bonus funds authorized in the legislation are awarded to States that develop high quality tests, instead of those who simply create new tests the fastest. A third Wellstone amendment would clarify provisions relating to the use of certain tests by requiring that the new assessments authorized under S.1 be used for diagnostic purposes only and that adequate yearly progress be determined based on the tests already authorized under current law.

APA believes that together these amendments will assure that the new assessments authorized in S.1 are of high quality and are used appropriately for the benefit of school districts, schools, and students. If APA can be of assistance to you and your office in your deliberations on high-stakes educational decisions, please contact our Public Policy Office at (202) 336-6062.

Sincerely,

Raymond D. Fowler, Ph.D.  
Chief Executive Officer and  
Executive Vice President