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THE CHAMBER FOR REGIONAL PROSPERITY



MONTGOMERY
AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Dear Alabama Legislator:

The Alabama Legislature has made great strides in recent years to make our State more attractive to business. We are currently facing a threat to that trend that requires your immediate attention. SB 190 and HB 254 would prohibit the State from implementing the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards for education. We are very concerned that this effort could seriously damage our “business friendly” status.

The quality of public education in the State of Alabama is critical to economic development success. Businesses locate, stay and expand where they are able to find educated workers and where their employees can access quality education for their children. Alabama is competing with the rest of the nation and the world for aerospace, automotive, biotech, information technology and other high-growth industries, and our graduates must be able to perform as well as or better than those in other states and countries. The only way to ensure this is to teach to the same high standards that other states use and to evaluate our students against those standards.

In 2010 the Alabama Board of Education adopted the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards which aligned with the Common Core State Standards. The Common Core State Standards were developed by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. They do not direct content or curriculum but instead set common standards that should be met by students at each grade level, regardless of where in the United States they live. The Common Core State Standards are used to develop the ACT and other nationally recognized assessments that are already being used in Alabama. The Alabama State Department of Education has adopted Plan 2020 which will lead to every high school graduate being college and career ready. This will be accomplished through the rigor of the Common Core State Standards and an aggressive data-based assessment and intervention strategy.

House Bill 254 and Senate Bill 190 threaten not only the vision of Plan 2020 but the economic viability of the State of Alabama by eliminating all funding for implementation of the Common Core State Standards, severely restricting collection and use of data in making decisions, and placing cumbersome requirements on the adoption of education standards, requirements that undermine the authority of the State Board of Education.

The crusade against the Common Core State Standards is part of national campaign of disinformation, claiming that the standards are a federal mandate and that they will force particular content or curriculum into classrooms. **These statements are both false.**

We urge you to oppose SB 190 and HB 254 and any other similar effort that would undermine quality education and place Alabama at a competitive disadvantage in our economic development efforts.

Sincerely,

Chip Cherry, CCE
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Huntsville/Madison County

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