

FEBRUARY 8, 2021 BY BETSY THEROUX

Rep. Lewis-Ward Announces Legislation to Suspend Public School Rating System

ATLANTA – State Representative Regina Lewis-Ward (D-McDonough) recently filed legislation which would suspend Georgia school and school system ratings, as well as report cards for the 2020-2021 school year. Rep. Lewis-Ward’s proposed legislation seeks to relieve pressure on educators and academic administrators as they work to overcome challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“School districts across Georgia are facing unprecedented challenges brought on by the pandemic and shouldn’t be evaluated against standards established in previous years,” said Rep. Lewis-Ward. “A temporary suspension will provide an opportunity for education leaders to implement the policies and practices needed to recover from the adverse impact of the pandemic. During this suspension, our schools and administrators can gain accurate insight on how our schools are performing.”

Rep. Lewis-Ward’s legislation to temporarily suspending systems ratings, report cards and standardized testing could help schools reevaluate their current educational standards, and this suspension would not absolve Georgia’s education leaders of the responsibility of finding solutions to help students meet established educational standards in the near future. This bill also seeks to offset the impact of COVID-19 on parents and students as both groups continue to make significant adjustments for the next academic year. Similar legislative measures have been considered or implemented in state legislatures and governing institutions across the country, including Arkansas, North Carolina, Texas, as well as Jackson, Mississippi.

Rep. Lewis-Ward plans to introduce the legislation with Minority Whip David Wilkerson (D-Powder Springs) and Karen Bennett (D-Stone Mountain), and she also hopes this legislation will gain bipartisan support. This legislation will be formally introduced in the coming weeks of the 2021 legislative session.

Representative Regina Lewis-Ward represents the citizens of District 109, which includes portions of Henry, Newton and Rockdale counties. She was elected to the House of Representatives in 2020 and currently serves on the Agriculture & Consumer Affairs, Banks & Banking and Interstate Cooperation committees.

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REGINA LEWIS-WARD

STATE REPRESENTATIVE DAVID WILKERSON, STATE REPRESENTATIVE KAREN BENNETT, STATE REPRESENTATIVE REGINA LEWIS-WARD