

HB 1483

2008

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to teaching chemical and biological
3 evolution; providing a short title; providing
4 legislative intent; providing public school teachers
5 with a right to present scientific information relevant
6 to the full range of views on biological and chemical
7 origins; prohibiting a teacher from being discriminated
8 against for presenting such information; prohibiting
9 students from being penalized for subscribing to a
10 particular position on evolution; clarifying that the
11 act does not require any change in state curriculum
12 standards or promote any religious position; providing
13 an effective date.

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15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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17 Section 1. (1) This section may be cited as the "Academic
18 Freedom Act."

19 (2) The Legislature finds that current law does not
20 expressly protect the right of teachers to objectively present
21 scientific information relevant to the full range of scientific
22 views regarding chemical and biological evolution. The
23 Legislature finds that in many instances educators have
24 experienced or feared discipline, discrimination, or other
25 adverse consequences as a result of presenting the full range of
26 scientific views regarding chemical and biological evolution.
27 The Legislature further finds that existing law does not
28 expressly protect students from discrimination due to their

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positions or views regarding biological or chemical evolution.
The Legislature finds that the topic of biological and chemical evolution has generated intense controversy about the rights of teachers and students to hold differing views on those subjects. It is therefore the intent of the Legislature that this section expressly protects those rights.

(3) Every public school teacher in the state's K-12 school system shall have the affirmative right and freedom to objectively present scientific information relevant to the full range of scientific views regarding biological and chemical evolution in connection with teaching any prescribed curriculum regarding chemical or biological origins.

(4) A public school teacher in the state's K-12 school system may not be disciplined, denied tenure, terminated, or otherwise discriminated against for objectively presenting scientific information relevant to the full range of scientific views regarding biological or chemical evolution in connection with teaching any prescribed curriculum regarding chemical or biological origins.

(5) A public school student in the state's K-12 school system may be evaluated based upon his or her understanding of course materials, but may not be penalized in any way because he or she subscribes to a particular position or view regarding biological or chemical evolution.

(6) The rights and privileges contained in this section apply when the subject of biological or chemical origins is part of the curriculum. The provisions of this section do not require

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56 or encourage any change in the state curriculum standards for
57 the K-12 public school system.

58 (7) This section shall not be construed to promote any
59 religious doctrine, promote discrimination for or against a
60 particular set of religious beliefs, or promote discrimination
61 for or against religion or nonreligion.

62 Section 2. This act shall take effect October 1, 2008.