

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 486

98TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE KOENIG.

0892H.011

D. ADAM CRUMBLISS, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To amend chapter 170, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to teacher academic freedom to teach scientific evidence regarding evolution.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 170, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 170.335, to read as follows:

170.335. 1. The state board of education, public elementary and secondary school governing authorities, superintendents of schools, school system administrators, and public elementary and secondary school principals and administrators shall endeavor to create an environment within public elementary and secondary schools that encourages students to explore scientific questions, learn about scientific evidence, develop critical thinking skills, and respond appropriately and respectfully to differences of opinion about controversial issues, including biological and chemical evolution. Such educational authorities in this state shall also endeavor to assist teachers to find more effective ways to present the science curriculum where it addresses scientific controversies. Toward this end, teachers shall be permitted to help students understand, analyze, critique, and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths and scientific weaknesses of the theory of biological and hypotheses of chemical evolution.

2. Neither the state board of education, nor any public elementary or secondary school governing authority, superintendent of schools, school system administrator, or public elementary or secondary school principal or administrator shall prohibit any teacher in a public school system of this state from helping students understand, analyze, critique, and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths and scientific

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

18 weaknesses of biological or chemical evolution whenever these subjects are taught within
19 the course curriculum schedule.

20 **3. This section only protects the teaching of scientific information, and this section**
21 **shall not be construed to promote any theistic or nontheistic religious doctrine, promote**
22 **discrimination for or against a particular set of theistic or nontheistic religious beliefs, or**
23 **promote discrimination for or against theistic or nontheistic religion. Scientific**
24 **information includes physical evidence and logical inferences based upon evidence.**

25 **4. No later than the start of the 2016-17 school year, the department of elementary**
26 **and secondary education shall notify all public school superintendents of the provisions of**
27 **this section. Each superintendent shall then disseminate to all employees within his or her**
28 **school system a copy of this section.**

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