

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
State of Oklahoma

SPEAKER:

CHAIR:

I move to amend HB1551 _____
Of the printed Bill
Page _____ Section _____ Lines _____
Of the Engrossed Bill

By striking the Title, the Enacting Clause, the entire bill, and by inserting in lieu thereof the following language:

AMEND TITLE TO CONFORM TO AMENDMENTS

Adopted: _____

Amendment submitted by: Gus Blackwell _____

Reading Clerk

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 2nd Session of the 53rd Legislature (2012)

3 PROPOSED COMMITTEE
4 SUBSTITUTE
5 FOR
6 HOUSE BILL NO. 1551

By: Kern

7 PROPOSED COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

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9 An Act relating to schools; creating the Scientific
10 Education and Academic Freedom Act; providing short
11 title; stating legislative findings; directing State
12 Board of Education, district boards of education, and
13 certain administrators to create certain environment
14 within schools; permitting teachers to help students
15 understand certain information about scientific
16 theories; disallowing State Board of Education,
17 district boards of education, and certain
18 administrators from prohibiting teachers from helping
19 students understand certain information about
20 scientific theories; providing for evaluation of
21 students based on understanding of course materials;
22 prohibiting penalizing of students for holding
23 certain position on scientific theories; prohibiting
24 certain construction; directing State Department of
Education to provide certain notification; directing
superintendents to disseminate certain information;
providing for codification; providing an effective
date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 11-121 of Title 70, unless there
is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

1 This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Scientific
2 Education and Academic Freedom Act".

3 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
4 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 11-122 of Title 70, unless there
5 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

6 A. The Oklahoma Legislature finds that an important purpose of
7 science education is to inform students about scientific evidence
8 and to help students develop critical thinking skills they need in
9 order to become intelligent, productive, and scientifically informed
10 citizens. The Legislature further finds that the teaching of some
11 scientific concepts including but not limited to premises in the
12 areas of biology, chemistry, meteorology, bioethics and physics can
13 cause controversy, and that some teachers may be unsure of the
14 expectations concerning how they should present information on some
15 subjects such as, but not limited to, biological evolution, the
16 chemical origins of life, global warming, and human cloning.

17 B. The State Board of Education, district boards of education,
18 district superintendents and administrators, and public school
19 principals and administrators shall endeavor to create an
20 environment within public elementary and secondary schools that
21 encourages students to explore scientific questions, learn about
22 scientific evidence, develop critical thinking skills, and respond
23 appropriately and respectfully to differences of opinion about
24 controversial issues. Educational authorities in this state shall

1 also endeavor to assist teachers to find more effective ways to
2 present the science curriculum where it addresses scientific
3 controversies. Toward this end, teachers shall be permitted to help
4 students understand, analyze, critique, and review in an objective
5 manner the scientific strengths and scientific weaknesses of
6 existing scientific theories pertinent to the course being taught.

7 C. The State Board of Education, a district board of education,
8 district superintendent or administrator, or public school principal
9 or administrator shall not prohibit any teacher in a school district
10 in this state from helping students understand, analyze, critique,
11 and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths and
12 scientific weaknesses of existing scientific theories pertinent to
13 the course being taught.

14 D. Students may be evaluated based upon their understanding of
15 course materials, but no student in any public school or institution
16 shall be penalized in any way because the student may subscribe to a
17 particular position on scientific theories.

18 E. The provisions of the Scientific Education and Academic
19 Freedom Act shall only protect the teaching of scientific
20 information, and shall not be construed to promote any religious or
21 nonreligious doctrine, promote discrimination for or against a
22 particular set of religious beliefs or nonbeliefs, or promote
23 discrimination for or against religion or nonreligion. The intent
24 of the provisions of the act is to create an environment in which

1 both the teacher and students can openly and objectively discuss the
2 facts and observations of science, and the assumptions that underlie
3 their interpretation.

4 F. By no later than the start of the 2012-2013 school year, the
5 State Department Education shall notify all district superintendents
6 of the provisions of the Scientific Education and Academic Freedom
7 Act. Each superintendent shall then disseminate to all employees
8 within the district a copy of the provisions of the act.

9 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2012.

10 SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
11 of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby
12 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
13 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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