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Senator \_\_\_\_\_  
2300 N. Lincoln Blvd.,  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105  
(405) 521-5561

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_,

On behalf of our members and the students of Oklahoma, the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) would like to express its opposition to the amendment to HB 2341 as proposed by Senator Steve Russell. In our opinion, the wording of this legislation clearly allows non-scientific explanations for topics such as evolution, the origins of life, global warming, and human cloning to be introduced into the science classroom.

The language of the bill specifically targets the scientific subjects listed above as causing “controversy” and goes on to state that students should learn how to “explore scientific questions, learn about scientific evidence, develop critical thinking skills, and respond appropriately and respectfully to differences of opinion about controversial issues.”

The position of NABT and our members is that “biological evolution must be presented in the same way that it is understood within the scientific community: as a well-accepted principle that provides the foundation to understanding the natural world.” A concept like biological evolution should not be misrepresented as opinion or needing of critical evaluation. Instead, it should be presented as what is, the unifying theme of biology, supported by experimentation, logical analysis, and evidence-based revision, based on detectable and measurable data.

As an organization dedicated to biology education, NABT is confident that the students of Oklahoma are best served when the science curriculum reflects current understanding of evolution appropriately and maintains scientific integrity in the science classroom. Allowing “educational authorities” in Oklahoma to “endeavor to assist teachers to find more effective ways to present the science curriculum where it addresses scientific controversies” is an invitation to allow materials that do not meet scientific standards to be used as explanations for scientific processes.

In addition to affirming the position of NABT as its President, I, along with Mr. Bob Melton our Secretary/Treasurer, also have the honor of representing this state as educators in Oklahoma. As such, we feel we must add that legislation such as HB 2341 serves to undermine rather than promote the efforts of scientists and educators to provide the best education for our students, and will tarnish the reputations of Oklahoma’s scientists and educators by allowing topics not aligned with educational standards to be introduced into the classroom. The result will be negative impacts on how Oklahoma is viewed and is represented, and impair the educational and economic development of the state.

We respectfully request that the state reject HB 2341 in support of science education that imparts to students an understanding of science based on the key components of the scientific method and content agreed upon by scientists and professional educators.

Thank you for your consideration,

Donald P. French  
President-NABT  
Professor of Zoology  
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Bob Melton  
Secretary/Treasurer-NABT  
Science Educator  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma