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[Senate Bill 1361](#) [4], introduced in the Michigan Senate on June 3, 2008, and referred to the Senate Committee on Education, is yet another "academic freedom" bill aimed at undermining the teaching of evolution. Identical to House Bill 6027, which is still in the House Committee on Education, SB 1361 would, if enacted, require state and local administrators "to create an environment within public elementary and secondary schools that encourages pupils to explore scientific questions, learn about scientific evidence, develop critical thinking skills, and respond appropriately and respectfully to differences of opinion about controversial issues" and "to assist teachers to find more effective ways to present the science curriculum in instances where that curriculum addresses scientific controversies" by allowing them "to help pupils understand, analyze, critique, and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths and scientific weaknesses of existing scientific theories pertinent to the course being taught."

In a press release dated May 20, 2008, Michigan Citizens for Science blasted HB 6027, [writing](#) [5] that "it does a disservice to teachers, school administrators and local school boards by urging them to incorporate material into science classes that is at odds with well-established science. The bill itself notes that 'some teachers may be unsure of the expectations concerning how they should present information on such subjects,' yet it does nothing to clear up that uncertainty. It does not spell out what ... 'the scientific strengths and scientific weaknesses of existing scientific theories' are that teachers are supposed to discuss and that lack of definition is intentional. This is a recipe for disaster, ushering teachers and school boards into a Dover trap, by inviting them to include material that not only has no scientific basis, but has already been declared in Federal court to be unconstitutional to teach. HB 6027 ushers schools down a path that will inevitably lead to expensive and divisive court battles. This legislation should be rejected."

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