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[Home](#) > Pro-science board member wins primary challenge

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[Pro-science board member wins primary challenge](#) [3]

In the March 4, 2008, primary election, Pat Hardy won the Republican nomination for the District 11 seat on the Texas state board of education, with 59% of the vote. A two-term veteran of the board, Hardy was challenged for the nomination by Barney Maddox, a urologist from Cleburne, Texas, who told the board in 2003 that the state standards were trying to "brainwash our children into believing in evolution" and who is billed by the Institute for Creation Research as "author of the biological sciences course material for the Creationist Worldview distance education program offered by ICR." The Associated Press (March 5, 2008) [reported](#) [4], "Hardy said her opponent kept his evolution views out of campaign mailings but did tell social conservatives he would vote with them. 'They could have taken a chance and pushed some of those buttons,' Hardy said."

The race was particularly important for the integrity of science education because, as the [Texas Freedom Network](#) [5] explains in its recent valuable report *The State Board of Education: Dragging Texas Schools into the Culture Wars*, the far-right faction on the state board of education now holds seven seats on the fifteen-member board. The addition of Maddox would have ensured a reliable majority for the faction, which already is expected to launch a campaign aimed at undermining the treatment of evolution in the Texas state science standards as they are reviewed and revised in 2008. The state science standards determine both what is taught in Texas's public school science classrooms and the content of the biology textbooks approved for use in the state, which is one of the largest textbook markets in the country.

[Science](#) [6]

[2008](#) [7]

[Texas](#) [8]

[+ read](#) [3]

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Links

[1] <https://ncse.com/printpdf/13215>

[2] <https://ncse.com/users/ncse-staff>

[3] <https://ncse.com/news/2008/04/pro-science-board-member-wins-primary-challenge-001681>

[4] <http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/APStories/stories/D8V764S00.html>

[5] <http://www.tfn.org>

[6] <https://ncse.com/science>

[7] <https://ncse.com/news/2008>

[8] <https://ncse.com/news/texas>