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The Clergy Letter Project's "Open Letter Concerning Religion and Science From American Rabbis" was the topic of a story in the *Chicago Tribune* (September 19, 2008), [beginning](#) [4], "For Rabbi Gary Gerson of the Oak Park Temple B'nai Abraham Zion, evolution does not oppose religious belief but strengthens it. ... Seeing evidence of the divine in the theories of Charles Darwin meant that Gerson did not hesitate to sign an open letter drafted by a suburban Chicago rabbi this summer supporting the teaching of evolution in public schools."

The [letter](#) [5], which urges public school boards to affirm their commitment to teaching evolution, was written by Rabbi David Oler of Congregation Beth Or in Deerfield, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. It follows in the footsteps of the Clergy Letter Project's similar open [letter](#) [6] for Christian clergy, formulated in 2004 and currently endorsed by over 11,000 members of the clergy across the country and around the world. The Clergy Letter Project also sponsors [Evolution Weekend](#) [7], on or about Darwin's birthday, in which religious leaders are encouraged to discuss the compatibility of faith and science.>

Rabbi Oler told the *Tribune*, "I would say that as Jews, being a minority, we're particularly sensitive to not having the views of others imposed on us ... Creationism and intelligent design are particularly religious matters that don't belong in [the] public school system." Michael Zimmerman, the founder of the Clergy Letter Project, added, "the goal of both letters is to say that religious leaders, both Jewish and Christian,

can come together and be secure in their faith without having their faith impact and pervert modern science."

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