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[House File 183](#) [4], introduced in the Iowa House of Representatives on February 3, 2009, and referred to the House Education Committee, is the latest antievolution "academic freedom" bill. Entitled the "Evolution Academic Freedom Act," HF 183 contains three sections. In the first, it is contended that "current law does not expressly protect the right of instructors to objectively present scientific information relevant to the full range of scientific views regarding chemical and biological evolution," that "instructors have experienced or feared discipline, discrimination, or other adverse consequences as a result of presenting the full range of scientific views regarding chemical and biological evolution," and that "existing law does not expressly protect students from discrimination due to their positions or views regarding biological or chemical evolution."

The following sections of the bill provide that teachers in the state's public schools and instructors in the state's public community colleges and state universities may "objectively present scientific information relevant to the full range of scientific views regarding biological and chemical evolution in connection with teaching any prescribed curriculum regarding chemical or biological evolution" and that they "shall not be disciplined, denied tenure, terminated, or otherwise discriminated against" for doing so. Also, the bill adds, although students "shall be evaluated based upon their understanding of course materials through standard testing procedures," they "shall not be penalized for subscribing to a particular position or view regarding biological or chemical evolution."

Presumably attempting to avert a likely challenge to its constitutionality, HF 183 provides that it "shall not be construed to promote any religious doctrine, promote discrimination for or against a particular set

of religious beliefs, or promote discrimination for or against religion or nonreligion." The bill also attempts to avoid a likely charge of inappropriate legislative micromanagement of the curriculum by disclaiming any intention to "require or encourage any change in the core curriculum adopted by the state board of education ... the core content standards ... or the accreditation standards and curriculum definitions" or in "curricula on biological or chemical evolution adopted by the board of directors of a community college or the state board of regents."

The bill's sponsor is Rod A. Roberts (R-District 51), one of the four assistant minority leaders in the Iowa House of Representatives. The *Sioux City Journal* (February 5, 2009) [reports](#) [5] that Roberts, an ordained minister in the Church of Christ, is contemplating a bid for the Republican nomination for governor in 2010. HF 183 is apparently the only antievolution bill to be introduced in Iowa within at least the past ten years. As of February 5, 2009, only two lobbyists were listed on the Iowa General Assembly's website as having declared their interest in the bill: the Iowa Christian Alliance favoring it, and the Iowa State Education Association — the state affiliate of the National Education Association, representing over 34,000 education employees in Iowa — opposing it.

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