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As the Texas state board of education prepares for its final vote on a new set of state science standards, no fewer than fifty-four scientific and educational societies are calling for the approval of the standards as originally submitted — without misleading language about "strengths and weaknesses" and without the flawed amendments undermining the teaching of evolution proposed at the board's January 2009 meeting. In their statement, organized by the National Center for Science Education, the societies [write](#) [4] (PDF), "Evolution is the foundation of modern biology, and is also crucial in fields as diverse as agriculture, computer science, engineering, geology, and medicine. We oppose any efforts to undermine the teaching of biological evolution and related topics in the earth and space sciences, whether by misrepresenting those subjects, or by inaccurately and misleadingly describing them as controversial and in need of special scrutiny." (The full statement is reproduced below.)

Independently, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the National Association of Geoscience Teachers, the Paleontological Society, the National Association of Biology Teachers, and the Texas Association of Biology Teachers have issued their own statements, collected by [Texas Citizens for Science](#) [5], with advice for the Texas state board of education as it considers its final vote on the standards. And the AAAS's president Peter Agre (a Nobel laureate) and chief executive officer Alan I. Leshner contributed a commentary to the *San Antonio Express-News* (March 23, 2009), [concluding](#) [6], "Leveraging science and technology to create new jobs will require properly educating all potential innovators. It's time for the Texas State Board of Education to reject misleading amendments to science education standards, once and for all. As Texas science education standards go, so goes the nation."

Texas needs to get it right."

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## **A Message to the Texas State Board of Education**

The undersigned scientific and educational societies call on the Texas State Board of Education to support accurate science education for all students by adopting the science standards (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills or TEKS) as recommended to you by the scientists and educators on your writing committees.

Evolution is the foundation of modern biology, and is also crucial in fields as diverse as agriculture, computer science, engineering, geology, and medicine. We oppose any efforts to undermine the teaching of biological evolution and related topics in the earth and space sciences, whether by misrepresenting those subjects, or by inaccurately and misleadingly describing them as controversial and in need of special scrutiny.

At its January 2009 meeting, the Texas Board of Education rightly rejected attempts to add language to the TEKS about "strengths and weaknesses" — used in past efforts to undermine the teaching of evolution in Texas. We urge the Board to stand firm in rejecting any such attempts to compromise the teaching of evolution.

At its January 2009 meeting, the Board also adopted a series of amendments to the TEKS that misrepresent biological evolution and related topics in the earth and space sciences. We urge the Board to heed the advice of the scientific community and the experienced scientists and educators who drafted the TEKS: reject these and any other amendments which single out evolution for scrutiny beyond that applied to other scientific theories.

By adopting the TEKS crafted by your expert writing committees, the Board will serve the best educational interests of students in Texas's public schools.

American Anthropological Association  
American Association of Physical Anthropologists  
American Association of Physicists in Medicine  
American Association of Physics Teachers  
American Astronomical Society  
American Geological Institute  
American Institute for Biological Sciences  
American Institute of Physics  
American Physiological Society  
American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
American Society for Cell Biology  
American Society for Investigative Pathology  
American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics  
American Society of Human Genetics  
American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists

American Society of Naturalists  
American Society of Plant Biologists  
American Society of Plant Taxonomists  
Association for Women Geoscientists  
Association of American Geographers  
Association of Anatomy, Cell Biology, and Neurobiology Chairs  
Association of College & University Biology Educators  
Association of Earth Science Editors  
Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists  
Biological Sciences Curriculum Study  
Biotechnology Institute  
Botanical Society of America  
Clay Minerals Society  
Council on Undergraduate Research  
Ecological Society of America  
Federation for American Societies for Experimental Biology  
Federation of American Scientists  
Human Biology Association  
Institute of Human Origins  
National Association of Biology Teachers  
National Association of Geoscience Teachers  
National Earth Science Teachers Association  
National Science Teachers Association  
Natural Science Collection Alliance  
Paleontological Society  
Scientists and Engineers for America  
Society for American Archaeology  
Society for Developmental Biology  
Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology  
Society for Sedimentary Geology  
Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles  
Society for the Study of Evolution  
Society of Economic Geologists  
Society of Systematic Biologists  
Society of Vertebrate Paleontology  
Southwestern Association of Naturalists  
The Biophysical Society  
The Helminthological Society of Washington  
The Herpetologists' League

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