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John Holdren

John Holdren, the head of the White House Office of Science and Technology, [told](#) [4] the *ScienceInsider* blog (April 8, 2009) that the recent adoption in Texas of a flawed set of state science standards was "a step backward." Asked "do you think that the Texas state school board's recent decision to add a skeptical view of the study of evolution and the fossil record weaken the state's science standards and weaken national efforts to improve science education?" Holdren replied, "Well, I have not reviewed that decision carefully. But my impression from reading about it is that it was not a step forward but rather a step backward. Of course, all science needs to be skeptical. It's hard to be against skepticism. But when you get into the domain of promoting particular views about the basis for skepticism of evolution, and those views are not really valid, then I think we have a problem. I think we need to be giving our kids a modern education in biology, and the underpinning of modern biology is evolution. And countervailing views that are not really science, if they are taught at all, should be taught in some other part of the curriculum." He added, "I'm not aware of any leverage we have, at OSTP or within the federal government, over the science curriculum in Texas, other than exhortation. We can argue and we can beg and we can try to educate. But we have no authority to act."

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