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## [Bill filed to repeal Louisiana's antievolution law](#) [3]



[Senate Bill 70](#) [4] (PDF), prefiled in the Louisiana Senate on April 15, 2011, and provisionally referred to the Senate Committee on Education, would, if enacted, repeal Louisiana Revised Statutes 17:285.1, which implemented the so-called Louisiana Science Education Act, passed and enacted in 2008. SB 70 was introduced by Karen Carter Peterson (D-District 5), but the driving force behind the repeal effort is Baton Rouge high school senior Zack Kopplin, working with the Louisiana Coalition for Science. The repeal effort is endorsed by the National Association of Biology Teachers and the Louisiana Association of Biology Educators.

"Louisiana's 'job killing' creationism law undermines our education system and drives science and technology based companies away from Louisiana," Peterson [said](#) [5] in a press release dated April 17, 2011, with Kopplin adding, "Louisiana public school students deserve to be taught accurate and evidence based science which will prepare them to take competitive jobs." The press release pointedly asked further, "How many businesses will locate elsewhere because they want well trained scientists? How many researchers will take their talents elsewhere or never come to Louisiana because of this anti-science law?"

The targeted law calls on state and local education administrators to help to promote "critical thinking skills, logical analysis, and open and objective discussion of scientific theories being studied including, but not limited to, evolution, the origins of life, global warming, and human cloning"; these four topics were described as controversial in the original draft of the legislation. It also allows teachers to use "supplemental textbooks and other instructional materials to help students understand, analyze, critique,

and review scientific theories in an objective manner" if so permitted by their local school boards.

Since 2008, antievolutionists have not only sought to undermine the law's provision allowing challenges to unsuitable supplementary materials but have also reportedly invoked the law to support proposals to teach creationism in at least two parishes — Livingston and Tangipahoa — and to attack the treatment of evolution in biology textbooks proposed for adoption by the state. Meanwhile, the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology urged Louisianans to repeal the law in 2008, and the Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology decided to hold its conferences elsewhere while the law remains on the books.

The Louisiana Coalition for Science, in a press release dated April 18, 2011, [wrote](#) [6], "In solidarity with Baton Rouge Magnet High School senior Zachary Kopplin's effort to repeal the 2008 Louisiana Science Education Act ..., the Louisiana Coalition for Science supports Senator Karen Carter Peterson's bill, SB 70, which will repeal the law in its entirety. In the interest of Louisiana public school students, the legislature should pass the bill and Gov. Jindal should sign it," urging concerned Louisianans to "call Senate Education Committee members and their respective House and Senate representatives and ask them to vote in favor of SB 70."

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