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Texas State Board of Education must still vote on adopting the revised textbooks

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Publishers have agreed to correct or remove inaccurate passages promoting climate change denialism from new social studies textbooks proposed for Texas public schools, a coalition of science and education groups announced this afternoon. This news comes as the State Board of Education prepares for a second public hearing on the proposed textbooks and a final vote on which texts to approve for Texas schools. The textbooks will likely be sold in other states as well.

Publishers Pearson Education, WorldView Software and Studies Weekly Publications had already submitted to Texas education officials revisions to textbook passages that included inaccurate information about climate change. The original passages cast doubt on the overwhelming consensus among climate scientists that climate change is a real and growing threat and that human activity is the primary driver of the problem. Today publisher McGraw-Hill confirmed to the Texas Freedom Network (TFN) that it will remove a deeply problematic lesson that equated unsupported arguments from a special interest-funded political advocacy group, the Heartland Institute, with data-backed material from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a Nobel-winning organization of scientists from around the world.

"We applaud these publishers for responsibly listening to scholars and the tens of thousands of people

from across the country who have signed petitions insisting that the textbooks put education and facts ahead of politics," TFN President Kathy Miller said today. "We hope they will stand firm in their decision and resist pressure from politicians on the state board to lie to students about one of the biggest challenges facing our planet."

Petitions calling on publishers to correct their textbooks collected more than 116,000 signatures. The petitions were sponsored by the Texas Freedom Network, National Center for Science Education (NCSE), Climate Parents, Daily Kos, and CREDO Mobilize.

Josh Rosenau, programs and policy director at NCSE, also praised the publishers' decisions to remove the scientifically inaccurate information from their textbooks.

"Pearson, McGraw-Hill, and other publishers did the right thing by making these changes," Rosenau said. "They listened to us and the nation's leading scientific and educational societies, ensuring that students will learn the truth about the greatest challenge they'll confront as citizens of the 21st century. These publishers should be proud."

Lisa Hoyos, director of the national organization Climate Parents, noted the importance of telling students the truth about climate change at a time when the science is under political attack across the country.

"There is a dangerous attack on climate science in our country, from Congress to the classroom," Hoyos said. "We are thrilled that Pearson and McGraw-Hill chose to stand with students, and to remove misinformation about the causes of climate change from their texts. These publishers need to resist any pushback from climate deniers on the Texas State Board of Education and to commit to tell nothing but the truth in the materials they produce for our kids."

The State Board of Education will hold its second public hearing and take a preliminary vote on the proposed textbooks on Tuesday (November 18). The board is set to take a final vote on Friday. The textbooks will go into classrooms beginning in the 2015-16 school year.

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The Texas Freedom Network Education Fund conducts research and citizen education in support of religious freedom, individual liberties and strong public schools. Climate Parents mobilizes parents and families to push policy makers and energy companies to stop prioritizing dirty energy and to scale up "kid-safe and climate-safe" energy instead. The National Center for Science Education (NCSE) is a nonprofit organization that defends the teaching of evolution and climate change.

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