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[Scientists to Texas Board of Education: Teach Evolution Right!](#)

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Oakland, March 25

Over 50 scientific societies representing hundreds of thousands of American scientists today publicly urged the Texas Board of Education to support accurate science education. The board—dominated by creationists—has been embroiled in a debate over changes to the Texas science standards that could compromise the teaching of evolution.

"Evolution is the foundation of modern biology, and is crucial in fields as diverse as agriculture, computer science, engineering, geology, and medicine," says the signed statement. "We oppose any efforts to undermine the teaching of biological evolution...whether by misrepresenting those subjects or by inaccurately describing them as controversial and in need of special scrutiny."

The scientific organizations signing the statement range from the American Association of Physics Teachers and the American Geological Institute, to the Federation of American Scientists and Society for American Archaeology.

The bottom line? "We want the board to support recommendations made by its own committees comprised of educators and scientists," says NCSE executive director Dr. Eugenie Scott. Adds NCSE Project Director Steven Newton: "The board's actions are the most specific assault I've seen against evolution and modern science to date."

The text of the statement:

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

CONTACT: Robert Luhn, Director of Communications, NCSE, 510-601-7203, luhn@ncseweb.org [4]

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