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In a September 4, 2008, press release, the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology [urged](#) [4] Louisiana citizens and legislators to repeal the recently enacted "Science Education Act" in their state, writing, "The Act was drafted under the guise of 'academic freedom' and appeals to cherished values of fairness and free speech. However, SVP says the Act intends to garner support and legal protection for the introduction of religious, creationist concepts, including intelligent design, in public school science curricula. By permitting instructional materials that are not reviewed by the state's science standards committees, the Louisiana Act and those like it encourage teachers and administrators to work outside these standards. This makes it possible for local school boards to define science and science education to suit their own agendas, thereby compromising the quality of science education for students, and allowing religious discrimination in America's public school science classrooms."

Founded in 1940, the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology is the leading North American scientific and educational organization concerned with vertebrate paleontology. According to its [position statement](#) [5] on evolution education "Evolution is fundamental to the teaching of good biology and geology ... The record of vertebrate evolution is exciting, inspirational, instructive, and enjoyable, and it is our view that everyone should have the opportunity and the privilege to understand it as paleontologists do." In decrying the Louisiana law, the Society joins a host of scientific organizations, including the [American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology](#) [6], the [American Association for the Advancement of Science](#) [7] (PDF), the [American Institute of Biological Sciences](#) [8] and seven of its member societies, and (together) the [Society for the Study of Evolution and the Society of Systematic Biologists](#) [9] (PDF).

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