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South Dakota's [Senate Bill 55](#) [4], which would have empowered science denial in the classroom, was defeated in the House Education Committee on February 22, 2017. A motion to pass the bill was defeated on a 6-9 vote, while a subsequent motion to defer further consideration of the bill to the forty-first legislative day — effectively killing it — passed on an 11-4 vote.

Among those testifying against the bill were representatives of the state department of education, the Associated School Boards of South Dakota, the School Administrators of South Dakota, the South Dakota Education Association, and Climate Parents, a national movement of parents, grandparents and families mobilizing for clean energy and climate solutions.

In the days before the hearing, there was a groundswell of opposition to the bill, as NCSE previously [reported](#) [5], from both state and national organizations, including scientific, science education, civil liberties, and environmental groups. And a petition organized by Climate Parents garnered almost 1450 signatures from South Dakotans opposed to the bill.

The day before the vote, the Associated Press (February 21, 2017) [reviewed](#) [6] the controversy over the bill, quoting teachers, parents, and scientists with concerns about SB 55, and citing a letter from Governor Dennis Daugaard in which he told a group of Augustana University professors that he views the bill as unnecessary.

A story in the University of South Dakota student newspaper *The Volante* (February 21, 2017) [quoted](#) [7] a state department of education staffer as describing SB 55 as "attempting to fix a problem that doesn't exist" and a number of professors at the university as expressing opposition to the bill — one describing it as "weasel-worded."

SB 55 reads: "No teacher may be prohibited from helping students understand, analyze, critique, or review in an objective scientific manner the strengths and weaknesses of scientific information presented in courses being taught which are aligned with the content standards established pursuant to § 13-3-48."

SB 55 was one of four similar bills active in 2017, along with Indiana's Senate Resolution 17, Oklahoma's Senate Bill 393, and Texas's House Bill 1485; South Dakota's was the only of them to have been passed by a chamber of the legislature but is the first of them to die. About seventy such bills have been introduced across the country since 2004.

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