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Alabama's [House Joint Resolution 78](#) [4] (PDF), introduced and referred to the House Rules Committee on February 23, 2017, would, if adopted, ostensibly urge state and local education authorities to promote the academic freedom of science teachers in the state's public schools. "Biological evolution, the chemical origins of life, global warming, and human cloning" are specifically identified as controversial.

Despite the caption "Urging teacher academic freedom regard scientific evidence subjects" (*sic*), the text of the resolution is essentially the now familiar text of the "science education act," recast as a resolution with three "Whereas" clauses and two "Be it resolved" clauses. Like Indiana's Senate Resolution 17, which recently passed the Senate Education Committee there, the measure would have no legal effect.

But, NCSE's deputy director Glenn Branch explained, "it would send a strong signal that the state legislature approves of Alabama's public school teachers presenting supposed alternatives to evolution, to climate change, and to any of the material covered in the newly revised state science standards. The passage of HJR 78 would promote not only confusion but controversy, perhaps even litigation, over the science curriculum."

HJR 78 is sponsored by Mack Butler (R-District 30) and twenty-eight cosponsors. Butler was the lead sponsor of House Bill 592 in 2015, a "science education act" evidently aimed at evolution primarily. Raw Story (May 7, 2015) [noted](#) [5] that Butler explained on his Facebook page that his bill would "encourage debate if a student has a problem learning he came from a monkey rather than an intelligent design!" HB

592 died in committee.

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[5] <http://www.rawstory.com/2015/05/alabama-lawmaker-my-bill-protects-kids-from-learning-they-came-from-a-monkey/>

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