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Alabama's [House Joint Resolution 78](#) [4] (PDF), which would, if adopted, ostensibly urge state and local education authorities to promote the academic freedom of science teachers in the state's public schools, passed the House Committee on Rules and then the House on a voice vote on April 6, 2017. After its passage on the House, HJR 78 was referred to the Senate Committee on Rules.

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. "Biological evolution, the chemical origins of life, global warming, and human cloning" are specifically identified as controversial.

The lead sponsor of the resolution, Mack Butler (R-District 30), 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!"

Butler was similarly forthcoming with regard to HJR 78. He [told](#) [6] the *Decatur Daily* (February 28, 2017), "In the development of critical thinking, we need to make it welcoming at least for a student or teacher to bring up another theory" — which the reporter explicitly identified as "intelligent design" — adding, "I've never minded evolution being taught, but I think the door should be open to other theories as well."

Like Indiana's Senate Resolution 17, which recently passed the Senate there, the measure would have no legal effect. But, as NCSE's Glenn Branch previously commented, "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."

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[4] <http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/ALISON/SearchableInstruments/2017RS/PrintFiles/HJR78-int.pdf>

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

[6] http://www.decatordaily.com/news/other_news/state_capital/lawmaker-wants-intelligent-design-resolution-students-excuse-d-to-play-taps/article_d273f5c5-e661-53ac-ad8d-443c1d9ffedf.html

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