



The people that brought us the Scopes Monkey Trial, “creation science”, and “intelligent design” are trying yet another strategy to get religious instruction back in American public schools. Prompted by model legislation developed by the anti-evolution Discovery Institute of Seattle, Washington, state legislators in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Missouri, and now Michigan have introduced deceptively titled “academic freedom” bills this session. In truth, these bills have nothing to do with academic freedom and everything to do with advancing a religious agenda in public schools.

- **HB 6027 is a thinly veiled attempt to reintroduce religion in Michigan’s public school classrooms.**

Despite the disingenuous disclaimer included in HB 6027 that it is not religiously motivated, it is plainly the latest strategy in the long history of the religious right’s war against Darwin. This bill is inspired by model legislation created by the Discovery Institute of Seattle, Washington. The stated strategy of the Discovery Institute is to promote theological non-science as a “wedge” to confuse people about the difference between what is and what is not science and introduce their intelligent design resource materials into Michigan classrooms.

- **HB 6027 would encourage people with religious agendas to disrupt the teaching of evolution in our classrooms.**

Even though this bill would require teachers to only critique evolution objectively and based on “science”, in practice this would encourage religiously motivated teachers to introduce the latest pseudo-scientific theory of the moment, whether it’s creation science, intelligent design or some theory that yet to be fabricated. Believers in intelligent design have been told that it is a legitimate scientific theory. They believe that HB 6027 will allow them to introduce theologically based pseudoscience into science classes.

- **In the competitive environment of today’s global economy, Michigan students need to learn real science not theological pseudo-science.**

HB 6027 calls the teaching of evolution controversial and would create protections for teachers who present critiques of evolution like intelligent design. In the world of real science, however, there has been no genuine controversy about the reality of evolution for many years. Given the increasing importance of biotechnology to Michigan’s economy, we cannot afford to confuse our children about what is and what is not science.

- **HB 6027 will almost certainly result in expensive litigation.<sup>1</sup>**

Because intelligent design adherents will believe that they are protected by HB 6027, it is very likely that they will sue if they are disciplined for presenting intelligent design in the classroom. These lawsuits will be initiated either by students suing their teachers who do not permit them to present intelligent design or by teachers who are disciplined by the school for presenting this theological non-science. The Discovery Institute promises to pay the legal fees of people who use their materials. The cost of defending against these lawsuits, on the other hand, will either fall on the teachers sued by their students or Michigan taxpayers.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Tammy Kitzmiller, et al. v. Dover Area School District*, 400 F. Supp. 2d 707 (M.D. Pa. 2005).