

1 HB592
2 168288-1
3 By Representatives Butler, Farley, Wingo, Ainsworth, Nordgren,
4 Ball, Fridy, Wood, McCutcheon and Rich
5 RFD: Education Policy
6 First Read: 30-APR-15

2
3
4
5
6
7
8 SYNOPSIS: This bill would require the State Board of
9 Education, local boards of education, and staff of
10 K-12 public schools to create an environment that
11 encourages students to explore scientific
12 questions, learn about scientific evidence, develop
13 critical thinking skills, and respond appropriately
14 and respectfully to differences of opinion about
15 scientific subjects.

16 This bill would also allow public school
17 teachers to help students understand, analyze,
18 critique, and review the scientific strengths and
19 scientific weaknesses of all existing scientific
20 theories covered in a science course.

21
22 A BILL
23 TO BE ENTITLED
24 AN ACT

25
26 Relating to the teaching of science in public
27 schools; to encourage students in K-12 public schools to

1 explore scientific questions, learn about scientific evidence,
2 develop critical thinking skills, and respond appropriately
3 and respectfully to differences of opinion about scientific
4 subjects; and to allow teachers to help students understand,
5 analyze, critique, and review the scientific strengths and
6 scientific weaknesses of all existing scientific theories
7 covered in a science course.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

9 Section 1. (a) The Legislature finds that an
10 important purpose of science education is to inform students
11 about scientific evidence and to help students develop
12 critical thinking skills necessary to become intelligent,
13 productive, and scientifically informed citizens. The teaching
14 of some scientific subjects required to be taught under the
15 curriculum framework developed by the State Board of Education
16 may cause debate and disputation including, but not limited
17 to, biological evolution, the chemical origins of life, and
18 human cloning. Some teachers may be unsure of the expectation
19 concerning how they should present information when debate and
20 disputation occur on these subjects.

21 (b) The State Board of Education, local boards of
22 education, public school superintendents, public school
23 principals, public school administrators, and public school
24 teachers shall endeavor to create an environment within K-12
25 public schools that encourages students to explore scientific
26 questions, learn about scientific evidence, develop critical
27 thinking skills, and respond appropriately and respectfully to

1 differences of opinion about scientific subjects required to
2 be taught under the curriculum framework developed by the
3 State Board of Education.

4 (c) The State Board of Education, local boards of
5 education, public school superintendents, public school
6 principals, and public school administrators shall endeavor to
7 assist teachers to find effective ways to present the science
8 curriculum framework developed by the State Board of Education
9 as it addresses scientific subjects that may cause debate and
10 disputation.

11 (d) Neither the State Board of Education nor any
12 local board of education, public school superintendent, public
13 school principal, or public school administrator shall
14 prohibit any teacher of a public school from helping students
15 understand, analyze, critique, and review in an objective
16 manner the scientific strengths and scientific weaknesses of
17 all existing scientific theories covered in the course being
18 taught within the curriculum framework developed by the State
19 Board of Education.

20 (e) This section only protects the teaching of
21 scientific information, and shall not be construed to promote
22 any religious doctrine, promote discrimination for or against
23 a particular set of religious beliefs or promote
24 discrimination for or against a religion.

25 Section 2. Not later than the start of the 2015-2016
26 school year, the State Department of Education shall notify
27 all superintendents of K-12 public schools of the provisions

1 of this act. Each superintendent shall notify all employees
2 within the superintendent's school system of the provisions of
3 this act.

4 Section 3. This act shall become effective
5 immediately following its passage and approval by the
6 Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.