



June 9, 2008

Dear Louisiana State Representative:

On behalf of the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS), I am writing to express concern with SB 733, the "Louisiana Science Education Act," formerly known as the "Louisiana Academic Freedom Act." If adopted, this legislation will negatively impact education and future economic development in Louisiana.

SB 733 represents the latest attempt by a small group of individuals with a specific political agenda to insert non-scientific concepts into the classroom. SB 733 is merely the most recent attempt to skirt the U.S. Constitution and the nature of scientific investigation. Advocates for SB 733 seek to manufacture questions that do not exist around issues such as evolution and climate change.

SB 733 would require that teachers consider and accept non-scientific explanations for natural phenomena, including evolution, the origins of life, and global warming. Supernatural explanations for these phenomena are not scientifically testable and are not science. Further, scientific concepts and theories are not decided by public opinion polls or by petitions, but through the rigorous method by which scientists conduct and evaluate research. By promoting the discussion of patently non-scientific ideas in the science classroom, SB 733 threatens the quality of science education and risks setting the students of Louisiana well behind their national and international counterparts.

At a time when national political and business leaders are calling for a reinvestment in our scientific research and education enterprise, passage of SB 733 would set Louisiana on a path counter to that of the rest of the nation.

The future educational, employment, and economic growth potential of Louisiana and the United States depends upon a scientifically literate workforce and a population capable of making informed decisions. A strong foundation in science that includes an understanding of evolution is required to fuel the advances in research, development, and innovation that will help Louisiana increase economic growth from new jobs and opportunities arising from science and technology.

In closing, please oppose passage of SB 733.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard O'Grady".

Richard O'Grady, Ph.D.
Executive Director