

## **Opposition to the Bill Regarding the Inclusion of Intelligent Design in Science Content Standards**

**Dear Legislators,**

Whether or not an individual believes in a higher power, or God, the bill being introduced is a blatant attempt to force certain individual beliefs on the rest of North Dakota. The proposal to require the inclusion of intelligent design (ID) in the science content standards for North Dakota's elementary, middle, and high school students raises significant concerns for me and many North Dakotans regarding the quality of education, the separation of church and state, and the integrity of science education itself. Please find these key reasons why this bill should be opposed:

### **1. Intelligent Design is Not Scientifically Supported**

Intelligent design is not considered a scientific theory by the majority of the scientific community and many North Dakotans. Unlike theories such as evolution, which are grounded in empirical research, evidence, and observation, intelligent design lacks the necessary scientific methodology and peer-reviewed evidence to be classified as a viable scientific theory. Science education must be based on established scientific knowledge that has been rigorously tested and validated. Promoting intelligent design in the science classroom undermines this foundational principle and could mislead students about the nature of scientific inquiry.

### **2. Violates the Principle of Separation of Church and State**

The introduction of intelligent design into public school science curricula poses a constitutional concern. Intelligent design is often associated with religious creationist beliefs and, as such, its inclusion in public schools may be interpreted as an unconstitutional endorsement of religion. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled in *Edwards v. Aguillard* (1987) that teaching creationism in public school science classes is unconstitutional, as it violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment, which prohibits government entities from promoting religious views. By mandating the teaching of intelligent design, this bill would open the door to legal challenges and guarantee incurred legal costs to the state. Legislators have a responsibility to ensure that the laws they support are financially sound and in the best interest of the state's resources. The financial implications of this bill cannot be ignored, and any legislator who supports it should be asked to justify the unnecessary legal costs it would impose on the state.

### **3. Undermines Science Education Standards**

Science education should focus on developing students' critical thinking skills through evidence-based inquiry and exploration. Requiring the teaching of intelligent design, a concept that does not adhere to scientific standards, could confuse students about what constitutes legitimate scientific evidence and hinder their ability to understand the scientific method. This diversion from accepted scientific consensus could harm students' readiness for higher education and their ability to engage with complex scientific issues in a meaningful way.

### **4. Unnecessary and Divisive**

North Dakota's current science standards already provide a robust and well-established framework for teaching science, including evolution, which is widely accepted by the scientific community. There is no need to introduce intelligent design, a controversial and unsupported idea, into the curriculum. Adding this requirement could cause division in the North Dakota community, create unnecessary conflicts

among educators, and detract from the focus on building students' academic strengths in science, math, and critical thinking.

### **5. Redirects Resources Away from Effective Science Education**

By mandating the inclusion of intelligent design, the bill also proposes that educators be provided with instructional materials and in-service training. This would divert time and resources away from strengthening teaching on scientifically validated topics. Rather than focusing on evidence-based science like biology, chemistry, and physics, teachers would be forced to address an ideologically driven topic, creating logistical burdens for the education system, all at a time when resources should be focused on improving the quality of education for students.

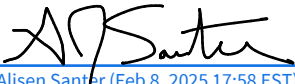
### **6. Public Opinion is Divided**

While some individuals and groups advocate for the inclusion of intelligent design in science curricula, many in the scientific community, education sector, and broader public oppose it. This bill fails to reflect the consensus of educators, scientists, and policymakers who are dedicated to ensuring that students receive the highest quality science education based on established, peer-reviewed knowledge. Legislators have a duty to create laws that serve the best interests of the public, but they are not equipped to dictate specific content in the curriculum, particularly when it comes to highly specialized fields like science. The development of science standards and curricula should be guided by experts in the field—scientists, educators, and curriculum specialists—who possess the knowledge and experience necessary to ensure that students are learning accurate, up-to-date, and rigorous content. By mandating the inclusion of intelligent design, legislators are stepping into a domain that requires scientific expertise, and they are potentially undermining the professional judgment of educators and scientists.

### **Conclusion:**

The inclusion of intelligent design in North Dakota's science content standards would be detrimental to the educational system, violate constitutional principles, and undermine the credibility of science education. Instead of introducing divisive and scientifically unsupported content into the curriculum, the focus should remain on teaching students the fundamental principles of science, based on the most accurate and evidence-based understanding of the natural world. For these reasons, this bill should not be passed.

Sincerely,



[Alisen Santer \(Feb 8, 2025 17:58 EST\)](#)

Alisen Santer  
1006 Campbell Drive  
Grand forks, ND 58201  
Alisen22@gmail.com  
218-79-0522