

Mr. Chairman and Education Committee Members,

I urge you to vote DO NOT PASS on SB 2355 which mandates the teaching of intelligent design in public schools.

I will not repeat the many good arguments made by others in their testimony in opposition of this bill. Instead, I would like to offer a short anecdote about my time in high school in Grafton, ND. I was a member of an active Christian youth group and fervently believed in intelligent design: that God created the earth. I was also very interested in science and held the scientific theories taught in my classes in high regard. My parents made the choice for me to be instructed at our church in the tenets of Christianity and intelligent design, they also allowed me to learn science at a public school. With those two experiences, I was able to hold it all as truth, even writing a speech to explain how science and religion do not have to be at odds. I still believe that to be true.

SB 2355 would take away a parents right to choose if and how their children learn about the religious belief of intelligent design and would make intelligent design seem as though it were in the same category as testable scientific theories taught in science classes.

I urge you to vote DO NOT PASS on this bill and to find a way to discourage lawmakers from introducing similar bills and resolutions that weaken our First Amendment right to religious liberty and waste precious time during the legislative session that should be used to serve the needs of all constituents.

Thank you for your consideration.

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