

North Dakota Senate  
Education Committee  
North Dakota Legislative Assembly  
600 E Boulevard  
Bismarck, ND 58505

February 10, 2025

**Re: VOTE DO NOT PASS ON SB 2355:** *A BILL to create and enact a new section to chapter 15.1-21 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to intelligent design in science content standards for elementary and secondary students.*

My name is Dr. Anastasiya Andrianova. I'm a tenured full professor in the English Department at NDSU, a public employee, and an educator with more than twenty years of teaching experience. The views I share are my own, and in no way represent those of my employer.

I write as someone who has spent many hours reading, thinking, and writing about alternatives to Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory (Natural Selection). I am a scholar who specializes in environmental humanities, a field at the intersection of literature and science. My master's thesis and doctoral dissertation both focused on philosophical debates around evolutionary theories and their depictions in 19<sup>th</sup>-century European literature.

I understand that, even before the famous 1860 Oxford debate about science and religion, many thinkers and artists sought meaning in a universe that Darwin would empty of all purpose and replace with randomness. These authors, including naturalist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, playwright Bernard Shaw, and philosophers Henri Bergson and Giovanni Gentile (the latter ghostwrote part of the 1932 "Doctrine of Fascism" attributed to Mussolini) offer fascinating food for thought. However, these alternatives—just as the doctrine of Intelligent Design, or Creationism—**do not constitute viable scientific theories and should not be taught as such in public schools in the state of North Dakota.**

Besides, the **separation of church and state** makes the mandatory teaching of any given religious perspective in a public-school science class unconstitutional. If someone wants to learn about these alternative accounts, they are welcome to take a course in the history of ancient civilizations, in the philosophy of science, or in religious studies once they're in college. Elementary and secondary schools are not the appropriate venue. Please let educators educate our elementary and secondary public-school students about evidence-based science, not faith.

**I urge you to vote DO NOT PASS on SB 2355.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A. Andrianova, B.A., M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.