



NORTH DAKOTA

Family Alliance LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 2355

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Good morning Chairman Beard and honorable members of the Senate Education Committee. My name is Marit Heidbreder with North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action and we would like to testify in support of Senate Bill 2355 and respectfully request that you would render a “DO PASS” on this bill.

Intelligent design is *the theory that matter, the various forms of life, and the world were created by a designing intelligence.*¹ The past fifty years of biological research have found that life is fundamentally based upon complex and specific information encoded in a biochemical language, a computer-like system of commands and codes that processes information, and irreducibly complex molecular machines and multi-machine systems. What do language, complex information, programming code and machines all point to? Intelligence. Intelligent design at its most fundamental level is based on scientific methods and evidence from nature.²

When a Christian organization such as ours brings up the subject of intelligent design, it is often asserted that it is simply a code word for creationism, and therefore a violation of the Constitution and likely to incur lawsuits against the state. However, creationism is defined as *a doctrine of theory holding that matter, the various forms of life, and the world were created by God out of nothing and usually in the way described in Genesis.*³ Creationism clearly differs from the definition of intelligent design because it is based on the Bible and faith, while intelligent design is based on scientific methods and evidence in nature.

We currently present one option to our students regarding the source of the universe and everything in it: the theory of evolution. Our materials do not include the alternative theory of intelligent design, even though it exists and is well-supported. Where is the harm in teaching our students *how* to think, rather than *what* to think? By equipping students with critical thinking skills to weigh different theories and evidence and ultimately decide for themselves which theory has the most merit, we empower students with valuable tools which will benefit them in their future workplaces. There will not always be someone there telling them what to think and what to do, but rather they will need to consider numerous situations and use their critical thinking skills to decide how to act and what to do for

¹ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/intelligent%20design>

² <https://intelligentdesign.org/articles/what-is-intelligent-design/>

³ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/creationism>

themselves. Including intelligent design in schools as an alternative theory to evolution will strengthen their ability to apply critical thinking skills to real life situations.

It has been said that it is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it. Albert Einstein also mirrored that same idea by saying, “Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think.”⁴ We needn’t be threatened by posing an alternative theory to teach our students regarding the source of our universe, but rather we should embrace the opportunity to train them how to think and weigh for themselves the supporting evidence for both options. Their future success will be largely impacted by their critical thinking abilities.

For these reasons, North Dakota Family Alliance Legislative Action respectfully requests that you please vote Senate Bill 2355 out of committee with a “DO PASS” recommendation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. I appreciate your time and consideration and I’m happy to stand for any questions.

⁴ <https://india.un.org/en/162946-education-not-learning-facts-training-minds-think#:~:text=Albert%20Einstein%20during%20his%20visit%20to%20Boston%20in,not%20really%20need%20a%20school%20or%20college%20education>

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