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HOUSE BILL 302

**50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2011**

INTRODUCED BY

Thomas A. Anderson

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC EDUCATION; PROVIDING FOR PROTECTION OF  
TEACHERS AND STUDENTS REGARDING THE TEACHING OF CONTROVERSIAL  
SCIENTIFIC TOPICS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. A new section of the Public School Code is  
enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] TEACHING OF CONTROVERSIAL SCIENTIFIC  
TOPICS.--

A. The department, school district governing  
authorities and school administrators shall not prohibit any  
teacher, when a controversial scientific topic is being taught  
in accordance with adopted standards and curricula, from  
informing students about relevant scientific information  
regarding either the scientific strengths or scientific

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1 weaknesses pertaining to that topic. A teacher who chooses to  
2 provide such information shall be protected from reassignment,  
3 termination, discipline or other discrimination for doing so.

4 B. This section only protects the teaching of  
5 scientific information and specifically does not protect the  
6 promotion of any religion, religious doctrine or religious  
7 belief.

8 C. Public school teachers may hold students  
9 accountable for knowing and understanding material taught in  
10 accordance with adopted standards and curricula, but public  
11 school teachers shall not penalize a student in any way because  
12 that student subscribes to a particular position on the  
13 controversial scientific topic being taught.

14 D. For purposes of this section:

15 (1) "controversial scientific topic" includes  
16 biological origins, biological evolution, causes of climate  
17 change, human cloning and other scientific topics that are  
18 often viewed by society as controversial; and

19 (2) "scientific information" means information  
20 derived from observation, experimentation and analyses  
21 regarding various aspects of the natural world conducted to  
22 determine the nature of or principles behind the aspects being  
23 studied. "Scientific information" may include information that  
24 coincides or harmonizes with religious tenets, but does not  
25 include information derived from religious writings, beliefs or

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