AN ACT

AMENDING TITLE 15, CHAPTER 7, ARTICLE 1, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, BY ADDING SECTION 15-706.01; RELATING TO SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)
Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

Section 1. Title 15, chapter 7, article 1, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended by adding section 15-706.01, to read:

15-706.01. Science instruction; requirements

A. The State Board of Education, the Department of Education, County School Superintendents, School District Governing Boards, School District Superintendents, School Principals and School Administrators shall endeavor to:

1. Create an environment in schools that encourages pupils to explore scientific questions, learn about scientific evidence, develop critical thinking skills and respond appropriately and respectfully to differences of opinion about controversial issues.

2. Assist teachers to find effective ways to present the science curriculum as it addresses scientific controversies. Teachers shall be allowed to help pupils understand, analyze, critique and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths and scientific weaknesses of existing scientific theories covered in the course being taught.

B. The State Board of Education, the Department of Education, County School Superintendents, School District Governing Boards, School District Superintendents, School Principals and School Administrators shall not prohibit any teacher in this state from helping pupils understand, analyze, critique and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths and weaknesses of existing scientific theories covered in the course being taught.

C. This section protects only the teaching of scientific information and does not promote any religious or nonreligious doctrine, promote discrimination for or against a particular set of religious beliefs or nonbeliefs or promote discrimination for or against religion or nonreligion.

Sec. 2. Intent

The legislature finds and declares that:

1. An important purpose of science education is to inform students about scientific evidence and to help students develop critical thinking skills necessary to becoming intelligent, productive and scientifically informed citizens.

2. The teaching of some scientific subjects, including biological evolution, the chemical origins of life, global warming and human cloning, can cause controversy.

3. Some teachers may be unsure of the expectations concerning how they should present information on such subjects.