

HB 1722 -- Standard Science Instruction

Sponsor: Cooper (155)

This bill prescribes definitions for the teaching of standard science in public elementary and secondary schools by distinguishing the differences between "scientific law," "scientific theory," and "hypothesis" and by requiring the teaching of intelligent design theory when scientific theory concerning biological origins is taught. The bill prescribes six major criteria for the presentation of information in course materials and instruction. Textbooks must give equal treatment to evolution and intelligent design. If a publisher certifies that its book meets the requirements of the bill, the book will be added to a list of prescribed textbooks to be kept by the Commissioner of Education and posted on the Internet. The bill contains a two-year, phase-in period for other textbooks and exempts textbooks owned by the schools on the effective date of the bill. State-controlled testing must conform with the bill. A nine-member committee to develop supplemental materials for interim use will be appointed, one member to be selected by the commissioner and one by each member of the State Board of Education.