

HB 656 -- Teacher Academic Freedom

Sponsor: Cooper

This bill requires the State Board of Education, other elementary and secondary school governing authorities, and school administrative entities to create a school environment conducive to the exploration of scientific questions and to assist teachers in finding effective ways to present controversial scientific material. These entities must not prohibit teachers from helping students understand the strengths and weaknesses of theories of biological or chemical evolution, and the bill must not be construed as promoting any doctrine or discriminating for or against any beliefs. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education must notify all superintendents of the provisions of the bill by the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year, and each superintendent must distribute a copy of these provisions to all school employees.