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February 27, 2017

AS AMENDED

SENATE BILL NO. 393

By: Brecheen

An Act relating to school curriculum; creating the Oklahoma Science Education Act; providing short title; providing for the creation of a school environment that encourages the exploration of scientific theories; allowing teachers to help students analyze certain scientific strengths and weaknesses; prohibiting the promotion of religious or non-religious beliefs; providing for certain notification; **providing for certain waiver of immunity**; providing for codification; **providing for noncodification**; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 11-103.12 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma Science Education Act".

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 11-103.13 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The State Board of Education, school district boards of education, school district superintendents and school principals

1 shall endeavor to create an environment within public school
2 districts that encourages students to explore scientific questions,
3 learn about scientific evidence, develop critical thinking skills
4 and respond appropriately and respectfully to differences of opinion
5 about controversial issues.

6 B. The State Board of Education, school district boards of
7 education, school district superintendents and school principals
8 shall endeavor to assist teachers to find effective ways to present
9 the science curriculum as it addresses scientific controversies.
10 Teachers shall be permitted to help students understand, analyze,
11 critique and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths
12 and scientific weaknesses of existing scientific theories covered in
13 the course being taught.

14 C. Neither the State Board of Education, nor any school
15 district board of education, school district superintendent or
16 school principal shall prohibit any teacher in a public school
17 district in this state from helping students understand, analyze,
18 critique and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths
19 and weaknesses of existing scientific theories covered in the course
20 being taught.

21 D. This section only protects the teaching of scientific
22 information and shall not be construed to promote any religious or
23 non-religious doctrine, promote discrimination for or against a
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1 particular set of religious beliefs or non-beliefs or promote
2 discrimination for or against religion or non-religion.

3 E. By no later than the start of the 2017-2018 school year, the
4 State Department of Education shall notify school district boards of
5 education and school district superintendents of public schools in
6 the state of the provisions of this act. Each school district board
7 of education and school district superintendent shall notify all
8 employees within the school district of the provisions of this act.

9 **SECTION 3.** NEW LAW A new section of law not to be
10 codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

11 A waiver of immunity from civil lawsuit, or termination of
12 employment, shall be granted to a teacher as defined in Title 70, as
13 long as they are acting in compliance with this act.

14 SECTION 4. This act shall become effective July 1, 2017.

15 SECTION 5. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
16 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
17 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
18 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

19 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
20 February 27, 2017 - DO PASS AS AMENDED
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