

THE AMERICAN
SOCIETY FOR
CELL
BIOLOGY

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August 26, 1999

The Honorable Bill Graves
State Capitol
Second Floor
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Governor Graves:

We write on behalf of the American Society for Cell Biology, a non-profit scientific research society of 9,000 basic biomedical research scientists in academia industry and government laboratories throughout the United States and the world. We view the recent decisions of the Kansas State Board of Education discouraging the teaching of evolution as a major setback for K-12 education that will have serious consequences for students educated in the State of Kansas. We are also concerned about the precedent that such a ruling sets for other states. It is our view that any state or locality that chooses to discourage the teaching of the theory of evolution is making a grave error that will harm their children's future.

The concept of evolution is inextricable from the language of all life sciences and is a cornerstone for learning by all those who seek an education in basic science, medicine, and ecology. Lack of exposure to evolution will impair Kansas students ability to compete for admission to high quality colleges and universities. Further, the generation of a citizenry that is not well versed in science will compromise the economic vitality of the State of Kansas.

We greatly appreciate your opposition to the Board of Education's ruling, but as you must know, the reputation of the State of Kansas has already suffered an enormous setback as a result of this action. We encourage you to work rapidly to repeal this decision to minimize the damage that this unfortunate event will have on the students and the State of Kansas. We also encourage you to speak out to let it be known that the Governor and his administration do in fact support the teaching of evolution.

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MOLECULAR BIOLOGY OF
THE CELL

DAVID BOTSTEIN
Editor-in-chief

Enclosed is a copy of a recent *Washington Post* Op-Ed on this subject from our colleague Dr. Maxine Singer, President of the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

Sincerely,



Paul Berg, Ph.D.
Cahill Professor
Emeritus of Cancer Research
and Biochemistry and
Director of the Beckman Center
for Molecular and Genetic Medicine
Stanford University School of Medicine
Nobel Prize for Chemistry, 1980
Chair, The ASCB Public Policy Committee



Robert E. Palazzo, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
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Member, ASCB Public Policy Committee

Enclosure

cc: Andy Tompkins, Commissioner of Education
The Kansas Congressional Delegation
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