

State of South Dakota

NINETIETH SESSION
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2015

159W0398

SENATE BILL NO. 114

Introduced by: Senators Monroe, Ewing, Greenfield (Brock), Haggar (Jenna), Holien, Lederman, Olson, Omdahl, Van Gerpen, and Vehle and Representatives Bolin, Campbell, Greenfield (Lana), Haggar (Don), Hickey, Kaiser, Latterell, May, Qualm, Schoenfish, Stalzer, and Zikmund

1 FOR AN ACT ENTITLED, An Act to encourage and protect the teaching of certain scientific
2 information.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA:

4 Section 1. That chapter 13-1 be amended by adding thereto a NEW SECTION to read as
5 follows:

6 The South Dakota Board of Education, local school boards, and all school administrators
7 shall:

- 8 (1) Endeavor to create an environment within all elementary and secondary schools that
9 encourages students to explore scientific questions, learn about scientific evidence,
10 develop critical thinking skills, and respond appropriately and respectfully to
11 differences of opinion about scientific subjects taught in curriculum and coursework
12 that is aligned to the content standards established pursuant to § 13-3-48; and
- 13 (2) Assist teachers to find effective ways to present the science curriculum as it addresses
14 scientific subjects such as biological evolution, the chemical origins of life, global



1 warming, human cloning, and other scientific subjects that may cause debate and
2 disputation.

3 In addition, neither the Board of Education, nor any local school board, or school
4 administrator may prohibit any teacher from helping students understand, analyze, critique, or
5 review in an objective manner the scientific strengths and scientific weaknesses of existing
6 scientific theories covered in the courses being taught that are aligned with the content standards
7 established pursuant to § 13-3-48.

8 Section 2. The provisions of this Act only protect the teaching of scientific information and
9 may not be construed to promote any religious or nonreligious doctrine, to promote
10 discrimination for or against any particular set of religious beliefs or nonbeliefs, or to promote
11 discrimination for or against any religion or nonreligion.

12 Section 3. By no later than the start of the 2015-2016 school year, the secretary of education
13 shall notify all school administrators of the provisions of this Act, and the school administrators
14 within each school district shall notify all teachers within that school district of the provisions
15 of this Act.