STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 57th Legislature (2019)

SENATE BILL 14
By: Bullard

AS INTRODUCED

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 advancement or inhibition of religious doctrine; providing for certain notification; providing for certain immunity from liability; providing for codification; 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 shall endeavor to create an environment within public school districts that encourages students to explore scientific questions, learn about scientific evidence, develop critical thinking skills and respond appropriately and respectfully to differences of opinion about controversial issues.

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

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

D. This section only protects the teaching of scientific information and shall not be construed to advance or inhibit any
religion. By no later than the start of the 2019-2020 school year, the State Department of Education shall notify school district boards of education and school district superintendents of public schools in the state of the provisions of this act. Each school district board of education and school district superintendent shall notify all employees within the school district of the provisions of this act.

F. A teacher as defined in Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes who complies with the provisions of this act shall be granted immunity from civil liability or termination of employment for acts described in subsection B of this section.

SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2019.

SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.