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Seeking Institutional Objectivity in Origins Science

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NEWS RELEASE:

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Ohio Board Establishes State Materialism

On February 14, 2006, Ohio joined Dover, Pennsylvania, by establishing state materialism - the idea that life and its diversity arise simply from purposeless material causes and natural processes and not by any intelligence. The argument that supports materialism is evolution. Evolution is a claim, now made into an Ohio dogma, that life arose from an unknown self-organizing chemical process and thereafter diversified due to random mutations and natural selection.

The Ohio Board effectively established materialism as the official state-endorsed account of origins by rescinding a science standard that would encourage evolution to be taught objectively. The standard that introduced objectivity into origins science education was one that would inform students of both the scientific strengths and weaknesses of evolution's core postulates. By teaching both sides of this scientifically controversial theory of origins, the state actually promoted the best in science and science education, while holding to a completely neutral stance as to the unavoidable religious implication of any origins account.

Contrary to the unsupported slogans of science institutions, evolution is extraordinarily controversial from a scientific perspective. Genuine scientific controversies exist about its critical assumptions, its inherently subjective and untested historical narratives, and a growing body of data inconsistent with its core predictions.

Evolution assumes life arose through an unknown process whereby matter and energy somehow self-organized into information processing systems far more sophisticated than any even imagined by human intelligence. However, the search for this self-organizing principle has turned up empty handed. Although evolution accounts nicely for changes within a species, biologists are questioning random mutation as the source of variation for new complex systems and body plans. Key evolutionary predictions that complexity increases gradually in the pattern of a branching tree, that most of the genome is an accumulation of evolutionary junk and that new variation arises due to random copying mistakes and assaults from chemicals and radiation are being called into question by a growing volume of scientific papers. Nobel Laureate Robert Laughlin recently characterized evolution as an "antitheory" that is "not even wrong" [*A Different Universe*, pp 168-70 (2005)].

This controversial materialistic idea that life is the result of unguided evolutionary change is the core tenet of non-theistic religions and belief systems like Atheism, Secular Humanism, agnosticism and Deism. These modern religions are competing for the impressionable minds of children as they form their world views. By directing that they be shown only the materialistic perspective of origins, Ohio is effectively promoting and establishing those kinds of religion over their theistic competitors.

Cardinal Christopher Schonborn noted in a lecture last October that "the question of the origin (whence do we come?) is *inseparable* from that of life's goal (where do we go?)." On Valentine's Day 2006, Ohio chose to skew our children's world views about their "life's goals" concerning religion, ethics, bio-ethics and even government, by establishing an official state answer to the first question - from "whence do we come? This one-sided metaphysical approach to origins would seem to fly in the face of both good science education and the First Amendment.

Intelligent Design network, inc. is a nonprofit national organization that seeks objectivity in origins science. Intelligent design is a scientific disagreement with claims that the apparent design of certain natural phenomena is an illusion that can be adequately explained by material causes. Objectivity is necessary because many institutions systematically suppress any objective consideration of that disagreement.