

PE1530/M

Andrew Steven Email of 8 November 2014

Dear Petitions Committee

I understand that organisations that embrace fundamentalist religious beliefs are trying to force their "Young Earth" doctrines into the science curriculum in Scottish schools. The memory of my late father, who was born and educated in Scotland compels me to add my voice to those attempting to prevent this travesty.

Evolution is not a theory in the sense of a proposition. It is scientific fact, supported by an enormous weight of evidence from all branches of science and with no evidence whatsoever to the contrary.

Intelligent Design, by contrast, has no evidence whatsoever to support it other than a literal reading of the Bible.

Organisations such as the Centre for Intelligent Design will tell you that you must "teach the controversy", as if the two views of the origins of life have equal likelihood. However, there is no controversy among reputable scientists; any controversy has been artificially manufactured by the CID and other religious groups.

I'm not suggesting that you inhibit discussions of religious beliefs in Religious Education classes - just that religious beliefs should not be presented in any way as a valid alternative to established science.

In short, evolution belongs in science lessons; intelligent design does not.

I urge the committee to look to the response in other parts of the UK, where other Government Education Departments have provided explicit guidelines on this matter. By allowing Young Earth and Intelligent Design teaching into the Scottish syllabus, you will set back the cause of scientific education by hundreds of years, with the concomitant reduction of scientific investment into Scotland.

Yours faithfully,

Andrew Steven