

2 State of Arkansas
3 90th General Assembly
4 Regular Session, 2015

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1967

5
6 By: Representative Bentley

7 Filed with: House Committee on Education
8 pursuant to A.C.A. §10-3-217.

9 For An Act To Be Entitled

10 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO
11 DISCONTINUE THE ADOPTION OF THE NEXT GENERATION
12 SCIENCE STANDARDS; TO MAINTAIN THE CURRENT SCIENCE
13 STANDARDS AND ONLY MAKE REVISIONS TO THE CURRENT
14 STANDARDS WITH SCIENCE STANDARDS THAT ARE SUPERIOR TO
15 THE ONES CURRENTLY IN PLACE; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY;
16 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

17 18 19 Subtitle

20 TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
21 TO DISCONTINUE THE ADOPTION OF THE NEXT
22 GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS; AND TO
23 DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.

24
25
26 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

27
28 SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY.

29 (a)(1) The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, which testified in favor of
30 Common Core State Standards at the Joint Education Committee meeting in July
31 2013, has conducted significant research comparing the quality of state
32 standards with Common Core State Standards.

33 (2) Their reports include Final Evaluation of the Next
34 Generation Science Standards, released on June 13, 2013, followed by
35 Commentary on Appendix L: Alignment of the Next Generation Science Standards
36 with the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, released on August 20,

1 2013, which compare Next Generation Science Standards to current state
2 science standards.

3 (b)(1) The Next Generation Science Standards were released in April
4 2013.

5 (2) The Fordham Institute evaluated Next Generation Science
6 Standards compared with all existing state standards, the District of
7 Columbia and two international science standards. They reported, "We
8 released that evaluation in June. It was the considered opinion of the review
9 team based on our criteria, that the Next Generation Science Standards
10 deserve a "C" grade. Among the serious challenges the analysts found in the
11 Next Generation Science Standards was an acute dearth of math content, even
12 in situations where math is essential to the study and proper understanding
13 of the science that students are being asked to master. The failure to
14 include essential math content is particularly troubling in light of
15 statements by the authors of the Next Generation Science Standards that they
16 intended to integrate mathematics into their new science expectations."

17 (c) Fordham's evaluation found the current science standards of twelve
18 (12) states (including Arkansas whose current science standards earned a
19 grade of "B") and the District of Columbia are "clearly superior" to Next
20 Generation Science Standards.

21 (d) For states that desire to improve science standards the Fordham
22 study advised, "If they are bent on replacing their science standards, the
23 Next Generation Science Standards is not the only available option, nor is it
24 necessarily the best one. We've noted previously six states received grades
25 of A or A- from Fordham's reviewers for their present science standards.
26 Other states might do well simply to adopt their standards."

27
28 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 15, Subchapter 1, is amended
29 to add an additional section to read as follows:

30 6-15-103. Science standards.

31 (a) The State Board of Education shall immediately discontinue any and
32 all efforts to endorse, adopt, rebrand, and implement the Next Generation
33 Science Standards.

34 (b) The state board shall continue to use the science standards
35 currently in place and only revise the current standards with science

1 standards that have been nationally recognized as superior to the science
2 standards already adopted.

3 (c) A comprehensive set of standards shall not be endorsed, adopted or
4 implemented until a complete set of the standards is available for the
5 review, comment, and approval process, which shall include the state board,
6 the Department of Education, the Senate Committee on Education, the House
7 Committee on Education, and the public.

8
9 SECTION 3. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the
10 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that experts around the country
11 have studied the Next Generation Science Standards and have determined that
12 they are flawed; that the current science standards in the state are superior
13 to the Next Generation Science Standards; and that this act is immediately
14 necessary to prevent further adoption and implementation of the inferior Next
15 Generation Science Standards. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist,
16 and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public
17 peace, health, and safety shall become effective on:

18 (1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

19 (2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor,
20 the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the
21 bill; or

22 (3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is
23 overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

24
25
26 Referred by the Arkansas House of Representatives

27 Prepared by: VJF
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36