

THE ELIE WIESEL FOUNDATION FOR HUMANITY

NOBEL LAUREATES INITIATIVE

September 9, 2005

TO: Kansas State Board of Education

We, Nobel Laureates, are writing in defense of science. We reject efforts by the proponents of so-called “intelligent design” to politicize scientific inquiry and urge the Kansas State Board of Education to maintain Darwinian evolution as the sole curriculum and science standard in the State of Kansas.

The United States has come a long way since John T. Scopes was convicted for teaching the theory of evolution 80 years ago. We are, therefore, troubled that Darwinism was described as “dangerous dogma” at one of your hearings. We are also concerned by the Board’s recommendation of August 8, 2005 to allow standards that include greater criticism of evolution.

Logically derived from confirmable evidence, evolution is understood to be the result of an unguided, unplanned process of random variation and natural selection. As the foundation of modern biology, its indispensable role has been further strengthened by the capacity to study DNA. In contrast, intelligent design is fundamentally unscientific; it cannot be tested as scientific theory because its central conclusion is based on belief in the intervention of a supernatural agent.

Differences exist between scientific and spiritual world views, but there is no need to blur the distinction between the two. Nor is there need for conflict between the theory of evolution and religious faith. Science and faith are not mutually exclusive. Neither should feel threatened by the other.

When it meets in October, 2005, we urge the Kansas State Board of Education to vote against the latest draft of standards, which propose including intelligent design in academic curriculum.

Sincerely,

Alexei A. Abrikosov
Nobel Prize, Physics (2003)

Linda B. Buck
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2004)

Richard Axel
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2004)

Aaron Ciechanover
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2004)

Günter Blobel
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1999)

Mairead Corrigan Maguire
Nobel Prize, Peace (1976)

Robert F. Curl, Jr.
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1996)

John B. Fenn
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2002)

Clive W.J. Granger
Nobel Prize, Economics (2003)

David J. Gross
Nobel Prize, Physics (2004)

Leland H. Hartwell
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2001)

Herbert A. Hauptman
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1985)

Dudley R. Herschbach
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1986)

Avram Hershko
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2004)

Roald Hoffmann
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1981)

H. Robert Horvitz
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2002)

Eric R. Kandel
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2000)

Wolfgang Ketterle
Nobel Prize, Physics (2001)

Aaron Klug
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1982)

Sir Harold Kroto
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1996)

Anthony J. Leggett
Nobel Prize, Physics (2003)

Jean-Marie Lehn
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1987)

Ferid Murad
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1998)

Erwin Neher
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1991)

Sir Paul Nurse
Nobel Prize, Medicine (2001)

Stanley B. Prusiner
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1997)

Irwin Rose
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2004)

K. Barry Sharpless
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (2001)

Horst L. Störmer
Nobel Prize, Physics (1998)

Gerardus 't Hooft
Nobel Prize, Physics (1999)

Daniel C. Tsui
Nobel Prize, Physics (1998)

Harold E. Varmus
Nobel Prize, Medicine (1989)

John E. Walker
Nobel Prize, Chemistry (1997)

Carl E. Wieman
Nobel Prize, Physics (2001)

Elie Wiesel
Nobel Prize, Peace (1986)

Frank Wilczek
Nobel Prize, Physics (2004)

Jody Williams
Nobel Prize, Peace (1997)

Betty Williams
Nobel Prize, Peace (1976)