

Department of Planning and Budget 2014 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: HB207

House of Origin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduced	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Engrossed
Second House	<input type="checkbox"/> In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled

2. Patron: Bell, Richard P.

3. Committee: Education

4. Title: Instruction in science.

5. Summary: The proposed legislation would require the Board of Education, local school boards, division superintendents, and school board employees to (i) create an environment in public elementary and secondary schools 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 scientific controversies in science classes; (ii) assist teachers to find effective ways to present scientific controversies in science classes; and (iii) allow teachers to help students understand, analyze, critique, and review in an objective manner the scientific strengths and scientific weaknesses of existing scientific theories covered in science classes. The bill also requires the Board of Education to notify each division superintendent of the provisions of the bill, and each superintendent is to notify all local school board employees.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: None.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Indeterminate. See Item 8.

8. Fiscal Implications: Though the bill requires no specific new training, it does require the Board of Education and each local school board employee to assist teachers to find effective ways to present scientific controversies in science classes. This provision would likely require the Department of Education (DOE) to develop guidelines for use by local school divisions. The cost of any such guidelines cannot be determined at this time, although DOE can likely absorb the impact.

The local fiscal impact for this bill may be seen in staff time, materials, and the development of a training program.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Department of Education, local school boards, Board of Education

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: None.

11. Other Comments: None.

Date: 2/7/2014 dpb/smc

Document: G:\GA\FIS 2014\HB207.doc