

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 153

BY REPRESENTATIVE WARREN

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop uniform alternative educational projects to be offered by city and parish school systems to students in elementary or secondary schools who choose to refrain from performing, participating in, or observing the dissection of animals, reptiles, or amphibians in a manner which would be harmful or destructive.

WHEREAS, students in the state of Louisiana have voiced objections to the utilization of animals in the classroom, citing religious and/or ethical reasons for such objections; and

WHEREAS, dissection at the high school level is illegal in some European countries; and

WHEREAS, legislation exists in Florida and California to protect students' rights in this matter, recognizing the rights of students having sincere religious and/or ethical objections to performing, participating in, and/or observing the dissection of animals or utilizing animals in a manner which would be harmful or destructive; and

WHEREAS, there are several alternative educational projects which may be utilized and are being utilized in some school systems already which enable students to obtain required knowledge through means which would not be harmful or destructive to animals, reptiles, or amphibians including the use of books, films, models, research projects, computer programs, botanical dissection, and naturalistic observation; and

WHEREAS, students participating in such alternative educational projects should be required to pass all examinations of the course of instruction in order to receive credit for such course unless such examinations require performing, participating in, or observing the dissection of animals, reptiles, or amphibians or utilizing animals, reptiles, or amphibians in a manner which would be harmful or destructive, in which case the student should be allowed to take alternative examinations; and

WHEREAS, such alternative educational projects should require a comparable investment of time and effort by the student and should not be used as a means of penalizing such student; and

WHEREAS, teachers instructing a course utilizing live or dead animals, reptiles, or amphibians, or animal, reptile, or amphibian parts should be required to inform students of their right to seek alternative educational projects prior to such instruction.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop uniform alternative educational projects to be offered by city and parish school systems to students in elementary or secondary schools who choose to refrain from performing, participating in, or observing the dissection of animals, reptiles, or amphibians in a manner which would be harmful or destructive.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such alternative educational projects should not be developed for classes and activities conducted as part of a program in agricultural education providing instruction on the care, management, and evaluation of domestic animals.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE