

WISCONSIN STATE
LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE HEARING
RECORDS

2005-06

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on
Education
(SC-Ed)

File Naming Example:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

- 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt01a
- 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt01b
- 05hr_AC-Ed_RCP_pt02

Published Documents

➤ Committee Hearings ... CH (Public Hearing Announcements)

➤ **

➤ Committee Reports ... CR

➤ **

➤ Executive Sessions ... ES

➤ **

➤ Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

➤ **

*Information Collected For Or
Against Proposal*

➤ Appointments ... Appt

➤ **

➤ Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule

**

➤ Hearing Records ... HR (bills and resolutions)

➤ **05hr_sb0506_SC-Ed_pt01**

➤ Miscellaneous ... Misc

➤ **



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Web site: www.fri-wi.org • E-mail: fri@fri-wi.org

To: State Legislators

From: Julaine K. Appling, Executive Director

Date: January 3, 2006

Re: Co-Sponsorship of LRB 3566/Use of terms "BCE" and "CE" in textbooks

The Family Research Institute of Wisconsin encourages you to co-sponsor/support State Senator Tom Reynold's bill that would prohibit Wisconsin school boards from adopting any textbooks that use the terms "CE" and "BCE" rather than "A.D." and "BC" (LRB 3566).

For the two-hundred plus years of our nation's history and the one-hundred-fifty plus years of our state's history, school children have studied the epochs of time as designated by "B.C." ("Before Christ") and "A.D." (*Anno Domini*—"in the year of our Lord"). The designations have served all of us, including researchers and historians, in good stead, with little to no argument. In fact, our nation's most important documents (e.g, the Constitution) use these notations to clearly note when the documents were signed and enacted.

Over the last decade or so, some academicians have started using different time designations, however: "BCE" ("Before Common Era") and "CE" ("Common Era"). These designations are slowly but surely creeping into public school textbooks. The explanation given for using BCE and CE is that these references do not offend people who are not "Christian." It's important to note that while the terms are different, the dates they represent are not. BCE ends at Christ's birth and CE begins there, just as BC and A.D. do. The only difference is the event is not explicitly stated.

In recent days the movement to replace BC and A.D. with BCE and CE has gained momentum. Last spring, according to the May 4, 2005, edition of the *Shreveport Times*, a committee of the Louisiana Department of Education had changed the state's high school diplomas from A.D. to B.C., thinking the change was "administrative and technical" and did not need the Superintendent's approval. Fortunately, the Superintendent disagreed and recalled the nearly 53,000 high school diplomas and had them reprinted with A.D.

Students in New York's public schools are encountering the terms in textbooks and worksheets, even though BCE and CE are not part of the state's official curriculum. According to NY's Education Department spokesperson, Jonathan Burman, there is no plan to debate the issue; and "[s]chools...may choose to use the new terms."

We believe these changes to "politically correct" historical nomenclature, particularly in our schools, are not only needless (not to mention potentially confusing), but are also deleterious, as they are part of the revisionist approach to history that for years has worked to change the public's perception of traditional, historical civilization, especially Western civilization. Part of the revisionists' approach is to expunge from the public mind and public discourse any reference to historic Christianity. Replacing BC and A.D. in textbooks certainly would move society another step forward in that effort.

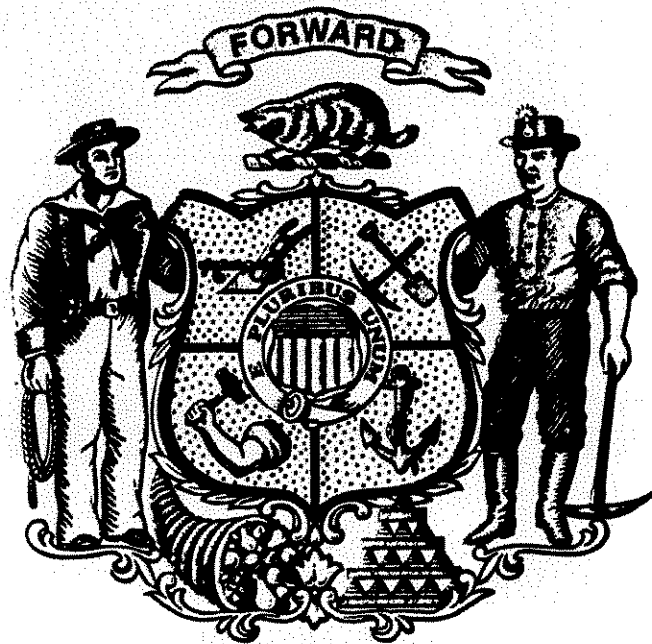
Such changes in textbooks are made very quietly. An analogous situation involving subtle, but very important, textbook changes took place in Texas in November 2004, when the Texas Board of Education approved new health

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textbooks for high schools and middle schools. The approved books by major publishers used phrases such as "married partners" instead of "husband and wife" and "when two people marry" rather than "when a man and a woman marry," when referring to marriage. Had one board member not been alert and willing to challenge the wording, the textbooks would have been adopted, in spite of Texas's marriage law.

The Texas situation reminds us that it is much easier to prevent something than to try to stop it once it is started. Senator Reynolds' bill gives us the opportunity to be proactive on this issue. It is a reasoned, preemptive measure that would safeguard Wisconsin's public school students from having to use textbooks that have succumbed to this unfortunate and undesirable trend. We encourage you to support this initiative.

If The Family Research Institute of Wisconsin can be of help, please don't hesitate to contact us.





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**Testimony of Julaine K. Appling, Executive Director
Public Hearing - Senate Committee on Education
Senate Bill 506 - Wednesday, March 1, 2006**

Thank you, Chairman Olsen and other committee members, for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 506 (SB 506).

The Family Research Institute of Wisconsin encourages you to support Senator Tom Reynold's bill that would prohibit Wisconsin school boards from adopting any textbooks that use the terms "CE" and "BCE" rather than "A.D." and "BC" (LRB 3566).

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