

Graduate School Sues Texas Agency Over Academic Discrimination

DALLAS, April 21 /Christian Newswire/ -- The Institute for Creation Research Graduate School (ICRGS), a California-based science education institution established in 1981, has filed suit in both federal and Texas state courts against the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), its commissioner, and some of its board members, for interfering with the constitutional rights of ICRGS in its application to move the school to Texas.

Named as defendants in the suits are THECB Commissioner Raymund A. Paredes, Lyn Bracewell Phillips, Joe B. Hinton, Elaine Mendoza, Laurie Bricker, A. W. "Whit" Riter III, Brenda Pejovich, and Robert Shepard, in both their individual and official capacities, for discriminating against the private school's academic and religious viewpoint.

ICRGS additionally names as defendant in the state lawsuit the THECB agency itself, which has a prior record of abusing the constitutional rights of other private educational institutions in the state, as determined by the Texas Supreme Court in 2007.

Since 1981 ICRGS has offered the Master of Science degree in biology, astro-geophysics, geology, and science education, and recently consolidated its four majors into a single Science Education major on a predominately distance educational platform, except for required science labs and/or field studies. Since its inception, ICRGS faculty members have been highly credentialed science professionals with terminal degrees from such schools as UCLA, Harvard, UC Berkeley, and other competent institutions, along with noted experience in science research at top private and government laboratories in the United States.

In fall 2007, the THECB Site Evaluation Team and Advisory Committee recommended approval of the ICRGS application to grant degrees in the state of Texas. However, both agency recommendations were subsequently rejected by Commissioner Paredes after evolution-only activists pressured the commissioner to deny ICRGS a degree-granting license in the state.

After twice convening ex parte advisory committees of his choosing (both of which included no committee advisors with special competence in the private sector Christian education school market served by ICRGS), Commissioner Paredes recommended on April 23, 2008, that the THECB deny a Certificate of Authority to ICRGS, which the voting members did on April 24, 2008.

Since June 2008, ICRGS has worked through the administrative appeal process with the THECB, and the controversy is pending in the State Office of Administrative Hearings.

ICRGS is a private, non-profit graduate school that receives no state or federal funding.

For inquiries, contact the ICR Press Office at 214-615- 8398 or write to press@icr.org.