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**AMERICAN FREEDOM ALLIANCE FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST
LEADING SCIENCE CENTER OVER INTELLIGENT DESIGN MOVIE
GROUP CLAIMS CANCELLATION OF "DARWIN'S DILEMMA" RESULTED FROM
ORGANIZED EFFORT BY SCIENCE CENTER TO SUPPRESS DISCUSSION**

LOS ANGELES, CA—American Freedom Alliance (AFA), a non-profit group, has filed a lawsuit in Los Angeles against a popular science museum for cancelling an event exploring the topic of intelligent design. The group says its free speech rights were violated when the California Science Center (CSC) abruptly reversed a decision to allow the showing of a pro-intelligent design documentary at the museum's IMAX Theater. The program was also scheduled to screen a pro-evolution film, but, the lawsuit alleges, museum officials were fearful of having intelligent design discussed in any context.

The lawsuit is believed to be the first since the 2005 case of *Kitzmiller v. Dover* to consider the public's right to learn about intelligent design. While that case focused on whether a public school violated the First Amendment "No Establishment Clause" by instructing students about the theory, AFA's lawsuit alleges that the museum violated its First Amendment rights by caving in to demands within the scientific and academic communities to deny intelligent design a public forum for discussion.

"The Center is a public institution and our event was planned as a debate with both sides of the controversy represented," said Avi Davis, AFA's president. "It is Orwellian when a public institution tries to suppress particular ideas it deems unsavory. It can be likened to a public library removing certain books from its shelves because the librarian disagrees with the viewpoints expressed in them."

The museum was selected for the event because one of the two films scheduled to be shown required a 3D IMAX projection system. The pro-evolution film, "We Are Born of the Stars," was meant to provide balance to a discussion about life's origin. The other film, "Darwin's Dilemma: The Mystery of the Cambrian Fossil Record," argues against evolution by questioning the absence of any fossil record predating the Cambrian period. When the screening was cancelled, the AFA scrambled to find an alternative venue and was forced to cancel the screening of "We are Born of Stars" in the 3D IMAX format.

The lawsuit alleges that CSC officials conspired to drop the event because they did not want the museum to be viewed as legitimizing intelligent design as a scientific theory. It alleges that the museum's CEO/President, Jeffrey Rudolph, was pressured to cancel the event by colleagues at the Smithsonian Institution, the University of Southern California, the Huntington Library and elsewhere. The complaint further alleges that because the CSC is a state agency, it violated AFA's First Amendment right of free speech by attempting to suppress legitimate discussion of the controversial topic.

“Certain museum officials and their cronies in academia and throughout the scientific community are part of a subtle but effective movement to marginalize a scientific theory that challenges their world view,” said AFA’s attorney, William J. Becker, Jr., of The Becker Law Firm in Los Angeles. “The public should be allowed to make up its own mind whether intelligent design has any merit. Any time public officials stand in the way of legitimate debate, they reveal their hostility toward intellectual freedom, which the Constitution is designed to safeguard.”

The screening was scheduled to kick-off “The Darwin Debates: A Forum for Dialogue,” a series of non-partisan events in Los Angeles sponsored by AFA exploring the competing theories for life’s origin, Darwinian evolutionary theory and intelligent design theory. The series includes a debate scheduled for November 30 at the Saban Theater in Beverly Hills and continues AFA’s goal of providing education and advocacy on topics touching freedom of speech and the defense of Western Values through conferences, film screenings and discussion events.

This year marks the 150th Anniversary of the publication of Charles Darwin’s “On the Origin of the Species,” which argues that man has evolved from lower animal forms. Intelligent Design is controversial, because it rejects “Darwinism” and proposes certain features of the universe and of living things are best explained by an intelligent cause, not an undirected process such as natural selection.

Inquiries concerning the lawsuit should be directed to William J. Becker, Jr., at bbeckerlaw@gmail.com. For information about the series, call the American Freedom Alliance at 310-444-3085 or visit www.americanfreedomalliance.org.

Note: *Facts in AFA news releases are verified prior to publication but may change over time. Members of the media are encouraged to contact AFA for the latest information on this matter.*

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