Baton Rouge, La. (AP) — Sen. Tony Guarisco thinks turning the tables on creationists is fair play in the drawn-out battle over what schools should teach about the origin of man.

In his package of early filed bills, the Morgan City lawmaker has filed one that says private schools that teach Bible-based creationism science also be required to teach the theory of evolution as explained by Charles Darwin.

“If religion wants to get mixed up in government, then they should be prepared for government trying to mix with religion,” Guarisco said in an interview Tuesday.

His bill says if it passes, private schools should use Darwin’s books, “The Descent of Man” and “The Origin of the Species” in their evolutionary courses. “I feel if we’re really serious about balanced treatment, it should work both ways,” he said. “Isn’t that fair?”

An avowed foe of the state’s one-year-old creationism law, Guarisco admitted he wouldn’t try to push the bill.

“I’m trying to make a point, and this I think brings it home,” he said.

But he said he is serious about pushing a bill to repeal the state’s balanced treatment creationism law, which is under attack in the courts.

His is one of three repeal bills filed.

What are the chances?

“I think it depends on the intellectual courage and honesty of the Legislature. Do we have enough courage to stand up and admit we passed a bad bill? One we didn’t think would ever become law,” he said.

So-called creation science holds that man and the universe were created and the universe were created in their forms by a supreme being, probably no longer than 10,000 years ago.

Often, creationists’ beliefs on the origin of man and the universe track those of the Bible.

Louisiana’s balanced creationism law says that if a public school teaches the theory of evolution, it must also give “balanced treatment” to creation science.

The constitutionality of the law is being challenged in two federal court suits. Both parties in the suit have agreed that the law — if found constitutional — will not take effect in Louisiana until the 1983-84 school year.

As passed by the Legislature a year ago and signed into law by Gov. Dave Treen, the measure was to take effect next fall.