

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6327

As of January 20, 2000

Title: An act relating to genetic discrimination.

Brief Description: Preventing genetic discrimination.

Sponsors: Senators Franklin and Stevens.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections: 1/25/2000.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Staff: Joan K. Mell (786-7447)

Background: DNA means deoxyribonucleic acid, a component of human body cells. Analysis of DNA produces a sequence of chemical base pairs (**A** = adenylic acid, **T** = thymidylic acid, **C** = cytidylic acid, and **G** = guanylic acid), which is unique to the individual.

Researchers, scientists, criminal experts, and businesses value interpretation of the unique sequences. The federal government is competing with private researchers to map the entire human genome. The federally supported effort is called the Human Genome Project; a segment of that project operates out of the University of Washington.

In the 1999 session, the Legislature enacted House Concurrent Resolution 4412, which resulted in an interim committee on DNA Identification. The resolution directed House and Senate members to study the policy implications relative to scientific advances that are making DNA useful. The resolution required consideration of privacy concerns given the wealth of individual information available from DNA.

Consumers have expressed concerns that information derived from analysis of their DNA will be used to violate their civil rights.

State civil rights provisions preclude discrimination against protected classes in employment, accommodations, facilities, real estate transactions, credit transactions, insurance transactions, and commerce. The protected classes are race, creed, color, national origin, sex, and disability.

Summary of Bill: A new section is added to the civil rights code that prohibits violation of civil rights based upon information derived solely from DNA analysis.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.