AN ACT Relating to the use of verifiable credentials; and creating new sections.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. (1) The legislature finds that blockchain-based technologies are enabling new and innovative developments in a variety of fields, including digital identity. In light of the dangers posed to individuals by data breaches, the legislature intends to consider whether decentralized management of identity data necessary for use by the state will provide greater privacy protection to the residents of Washington. Therefore, the legislature concludes that state government should examine opportunities for allowing for the use of verifiable credentials in transactions with or involving state government agencies, public institutions of higher education, and political subdivisions of the state.

(2) By December 1, 2022, the consolidated technology services agency, department of health, department of licensing, institutions of higher education, and secretary of state shall each produce an individual, agency-specific report to the legislature detailing, in the opinion of each agency, which of the agency's programs, services, and projects may be well-suited to the inclusion and use of
verifiable credentials as a means for improving efficiency, customer experience, and safeguarding privacy.

(3) In preparing reports under subsection (2) of this section, agencies shall consult with appropriate technology industry representatives, including a Washington-based trade association for the full cross-section of the technology sector. The purpose of the consultation required under this subsection is to ensure that the agencies become informed of the basic definitions and standards used by the technology industry in Washington for verifiable credentials.

(4) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Agency" means the consolidated technology services agency, department of health, department of licensing, institutions of higher education, and secretary of state.

(b) "Blockchain" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 1.80.010.

(c) "Institutions of higher education" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.

(d) "Verifiable credential" means a tamper-evident credential that has authorship that can be cryptographically verified.

NEW SECTION.  Sec. 2. (1) The legislature finds that establishing a trust framework for verifiable credentials would benefit the people of Washington through the public and private sectors by enhancing efficiency and providing for uniformity around issues such as privacy and data sharing. Furthermore, a trust framework for Washington would allow for the use of comprehensive, interoperable definitions and standards for verifiable credentials.

(2) By October 1, 2022, the consolidated technology services agency shall develop a process for creating a recommended trust framework for verifiable credentials in Washington. The process developed under this subsection should include the public and private sectors and must involve participation with technology industry representatives, consumer protection advocates, and other similar stakeholders.

(3) The consolidated technology services agency shall engage with stakeholders and others through the process developed under subsection (2) of this section to create a recommended trust framework for verifiable credentials in Washington by December 1, 2023. The consolidated technology services agency shall submit the recommended trust framework, along with any recommendations for
legislation necessary to enact or implement the trust framework, to
the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2023.