

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HCR 4412

As Passed Legislature:

Brief Description: Creating a joint select committee to address the potential uses and concerns of DNA identification.

Sponsors: Representatives Miloscia, Ballasiotes and O'Brien.

Brief History:

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 4/23/99, Adopted.

Passed Senate: 4/24/99, 46-0.

<h3>Brief Summary of Bill</h3>

- Establishes a joint select committee on DNA identification.

Staff: Jean Ann Quinn (786-7310).

Background:

DNA is the chemical deoxyribonucleic acid, which stores the genetic code of the human body. It is present in almost every cell in the body and a DNA "print" is readily obtainable from various bodily tissue and fluids, such as blood, hair, skin, saliva, and semen. According to generally accepted genetic theory, for each individual (except identical twins) the DNA sequence « the order of the DNA building blocks « is different, making each person's DNA unique.

Advances in technology have helped DNA testing become an established part of criminal justice procedure. Today many states have legislation related to DNA databanking, much of it focusing on collecting and testing DNA from individuals convicted of certain crimes, such as sexual assaults and homicides. DNA technology is also of tremendous value for medical purposes and scientific research.

The collection, analysis, storage, and use of DNA samples and the genetic information obtained from them raises concerns related to individual privacy rights.

Summary of Bill:

A joint select committee on DNA identification is to be established to review DNA use, identification, testing, data banking, technology, research, and privacy issues. The committee is authorized to consult with individuals from the public and private sector in conducting this review. The committee will consist of eight members, two appointed by the President of the Senate from each of the two largest caucuses of the Senate, and two appointed by the Co-Speakers of the House of Representatives from each of the two largest caucuses of the House of Representatives.

The joint select committee on DNA identification is to report its findings and recommendations to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 1999. The committee expires July 1, 2000.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.