
HOUSE BILL 2273

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Representatives Slatter and Irwin

Prefiled 12/23/19. Read first time 01/13/20. Referred to Committee on Innovation, Technology & Economic Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a study committee on human genome
2 editing; adding a new section to chapter 70.220 RCW; creating a new
3 section; and providing an expiration date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the increasing
6 scientific knowledge of genetics and genomics has offered insights
7 into fundamental biological processes and enabled accurate diagnosis,
8 early intervention, and targeted therapies of genetic diseases. In
9 addition, the science of human genome editing, a collection of
10 technologies for creating changes in human genome, has advanced
11 rapidly and demonstrated significant potential increases in
12 efficiency and precision of achieving desired results while reducing
13 unintended or harmful events. With these advances come many profound
14 ethical questions about a wide range of potential applications that
15 include not only treating but also preventing disease in this and
16 future generations, or altering human traits unrelated to health
17 concerns. Ensuring safe and ethically acceptable uses of these
18 powerful tools and precluding irresponsible practices require
19 establishing appropriate regulations based on rigorous discussions
20 with the scientific community and diverse stakeholders about the
21 health and societal benefits and risks of human genome editing.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 70.220
2 RCW to read as follows:

3 (1) For the purpose of this section, "human genome editing" means
4 any process, techniques, or technologies for making precise
5 additions, deletions, and alterations to the human genome.

6 (2)(a) The Washington academy of sciences formed under this
7 chapter must establish a study committee to examine scientific,
8 ethical, and societal issues associated with human genome editing and
9 to inform legislative approaches to safe and ethically responsible
10 uses of human genome editing.

11 (b) The study committee must:

12 (i) Review existing scientific research on the safety and
13 efficacy of human genome editing and evaluate potential health
14 applications, benefits, and risks of human genome editing;

15 (ii) Examine the ethical, legal, and societal implications of
16 using human genome editing;

17 (iii) Review existing regulatory infrastructure and processes for
18 evaluating or funding human genome editing development and uses, and
19 consider what additional regulatory and oversight approaches may help
20 ensure responsible and prudent use of human genome editing; and

21 (iv) Develop guiding principles for regulating human genome
22 editing.

23 (c) The membership of the study committee is not limited to
24 persons elected to the Washington academy of sciences and must
25 include:

26 (i) Researchers and clinicians from relevant scientific
27 disciplines;

28 (ii) Experts in the area of bioethics, ethics and public health,
29 or ethics and the emerging biomedical technologies; and

30 (iii) Representatives of the two largest caucuses of the senate
31 and the house of representatives, appointed by the president of the
32 senate and the speaker of the house of representatives, respectively,
33 to serve on the study committee in a nonvoting observational
34 capacity.

35 (d) In considering the issues described in (b) of this
36 subsection, the study committee must solicit public participation and
37 hold at least one meeting to provide a public forum for diverse
38 perspectives about human genome editing.

39 (e) By October 1, 2021, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the
40 study committee must submit to the relevant committees of the

1 legislature a report that summarizes the activities and findings of
2 the study committee and recommends the guiding principles for
3 regulating human genome editing.

4 (3) This section expires June 30, 2022.

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