

Mr H V Beardsell

8 June 2010

The Chairperson
Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee
Gene Patents

I would like to present this submission to the Gene Patents Committee. I am not involved in genetics in any way, Not as a scientist, NOT as a patent lawyer, Not as anyone with a direct or indirect interest in gene technology, except of course, that I have genes like everyone else and like every other living thing, plants, animals, insects etc.

I find the whole concept of anyone being allowed to patent genes and gene technology as bizarre. After all, genes have been in every type of living material since time immemorial and to think that some “smart” company should be able to say it has a patent over genes and the processes to manipulate and examine them is beyond my comprehension. Probably public funds have been provided to scientists and researchers at Universities and Research Institutions to investigate some aspects of genes e.g. whether there is some possible link between a certain gene and a disposition to a certain disease, such as cancer. Having done this with public funds, some “smart” company, which has done nothing to date, now appears on the scene and is able to patent the genes and states it is the only organization now able to test for a gene and forbids anyone else from entering this field unless they (the “smart” company) specifically allows.

This is absolutely bizarre and I urge the Committee to ensure that Australia does not allow the patenting of genes and gene technology by any foreign or local companies which could affect any Australian research, testing etc on any genes, human or otherwise, now or at anytime in the future. Let us stop being browbeaten and “duded” by “smart” businesses and foreign companies and foreign countries.

Yours sincerely,

Harry Beardsell