

## **Senate inquiry into gene patents**

From Alison Wylie

My interest in this inquiry is as a member of the community who is concerned over the patenting of genes in all spheres.

I strongly believe that the granting of patents in Australia over human and microbial genes and non-coding sequences, proteins, and their derivatives, including those materials in an isolated form is wrong.

Genes and gene sequences are not an invention, so should not be patented.

The granting of patent monopolies over such materials means that information that should be part of the public domain can be controlled by private companies.

This must inevitably lead to increased cost of research as the reason something is patented is to give the owner the right to make money out of it. This will reduce those companies and individuals who can work in this area to companies and institutions which are wealthy enough, not necessarily those who are the most able.

It should be a function of government to protect that information which is intrinsic, that may have been discovered but has not been invented, for the the health and wellbeing of the Australian people.

The *Patents Act 1990* should be amended so as to expressly prohibit the granting of patent monopolies over such materials.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Alison Wylie