

By: Laubenberg

H.B. No. 1220

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a property right in certain DNA samples; providing injunctive relief and a civil penalty; creating a criminal offense.

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

SECTION 1. Title 1, Property Code, is amended by adding Chapter 3 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 3. PROPERTY RIGHT IN CERTAIN DNA SAMPLES

Sec. 3.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "DNA" means deoxyribonucleic acid.

(2) "DNA sample" means a blood sample or other biological sample or specimen provided by an individual for the purpose of conducting DNA analysis or storage.

(3) "Genetic characteristic" means a scientifically or medically identifiable genetic or chromosomal variation, composition, or alteration that predisposes an individual to a disease, disorder, or syndrome.

(4) "Genetic test" means a presymptomatic laboratory test of an individual's genes, products, or chromosomes that:

(A) analyzes the individual's DNA, RNA, proteins, or chromosomes; and

(B) is performed to identify a genetic characteristic.

(5) "Property right" means the property right created by this chapter.

1           (6) "RNA" means ribonucleic acid.

2           Sec. 3.002. PROPERTY RIGHT ESTABLISHED. (a) Subject to  
3 Subsection (b), an individual has an exclusive property right in a  
4 DNA sample provided by the individual. A person may not, without  
5 the informed, written consent of the individual or the individual's  
6 legal guardian or authorized representative:

7           (1) collect a DNA sample from an individual;

8           (2) perform a genetic test on an individual's DNA  
9 sample; or

10          (3) retain an individual's DNA sample.

11          (b) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), this chapter does not  
12 apply to:

13          (1) a DNA sample collected for the purpose of  
14 emergency medical treatment;

15          (2) a DNA sample collected for law enforcement  
16 purposes, including the identification of a perpetrator and the  
17 investigation of a crime, or identification of a missing,  
18 unidentified, or deceased person; or

19          (3) any other similar use of a DNA sample under the  
20 laws of this state or another jurisdiction.

21          Sec. 3.003. CIVIL PENALTY; INJUNCTION. (a) A person who  
22 violates Section 3.002 is liable to the state for a civil penalty  
23 not to exceed the amount of any profits that are attributable to the  
24 violation. The amount of profits under this subsection may be  
25 established by showing the gross revenue attributable to the  
26 unauthorized use minus any expenses that the person who committed  
27 the unauthorized use may prove.

1        (b) Subject to Subsection (a), the amount of a civil penalty  
2 under this section shall be based on:

3            (1) the seriousness of the violation, including the  
4 nature, circumstances, extent, and gravity of the violation;

5            (2) the economic harm caused by the violation;

6            (3) the history of previous violations;

7            (4) the amount necessary to deter a future violation;

8            (5) efforts to correct the violation; and

9            (6) any other matter that justice may require.

10        (c) If it appears that a person has violated Section 3.002,  
11 the attorney general may institute an action for a civil penalty,  
12 injunctive relief, or both.

13        (d) The attorney general may recover reasonable attorney's  
14 fees and expenses and court costs incurred in recovering a civil  
15 penalty or obtaining injunctive relief under this section.

16        Sec. 3.004. CRIMINAL PENALTY. A person commits an offense  
17 if the person, with criminal negligence, violates Section 3.002.  
18 An offense under this section is a Class A misdemeanor.

19        SECTION 2. Chapter 3, Property Code, as added by this Act,  
20 applies only to a DNA sample collected or provided on or after the  
21 effective date of this Act. A DNA sample collected or provided  
22 before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law as it  
23 existed immediately before that date, and that law is continued in  
24 effect for that purpose.

25        SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.