

MINUTES
SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 19, 2024

TIME: 2:00 P.M.

PLACE: Room WW54

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair VanOrden, Senators Harris, Bjerke, Zuiderveld, Wintrow, and Taylor

ABSENT/ EXCUSED: Senator Lee

NOTE: The sign-in sheet, testimonies and other related materials will be retained with the minutes in the committee's office until the end of the session and will then be located on file with the minutes in the Legislative Services Library.

CONVENED: **Chair VanOrden** called the meeting of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee (Committee) to order at 2:12 p.m.

Senator Harris relayed he was asked by Senator Lee to approve the meeting minutes in her absence.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Harris** moved to approve the Minutes of February 12, 2024. **Senator Bjerke** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Harris** moved to approve the Minutes of February 19, 2024. **Senator Taylor** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Wintrow** moved to approve the Minutes of February 29, 2024. **Senator Harris** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Wintrow** moved to approve the Minutes of March 4, 2024. **Senator Taylor** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Zuiderveld** moved to approve the Minutes of March 11, 2024. **Senator Bjerke** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

MINUTES APPROVAL: **Senator Zuiderveld** moved to approve the Minutes of March 12, 2024. **Senator Harris** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

PASSED THE GAVEL: Chair VanOrden passed the gavel to Senator Harris.

HCR 39 **RULE APPROVAL - HOUSE HEALTH AND WELFARE AND SENATE HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEES - States findings of the Legislature and approves pending and temporary rules of the Department of Health and Welfare and the Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses reviewed by the House Health and Welfare Committee and the Senate Health and Welfare Committee, with exceptions.** **Chair VanOrden** stated this was the approval of all the work the Committee did this year on administrative rules. The first two pages were the approved rules and page three was the rejected rules or sections. These were agreed upon by the House Health and Welfare Committee.

MOTION: **Senator Zuiderveld** moved to send **HCR 39** to the floor with a do pass recommendation. **Senator Bjerke** seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: **Senator Wintrow** did not agree with the rejection of the ethics of the social workers. That was something she disagreed with that the committee on, but stated she would vote to approve the resolution.

VOTE: The motion passed by **voice vote**.

**PASSED THE
GAVEL:**

Senator Harris passed the gavel to Chair VanOrden.

H 670

HEALTH - Adds to existing law to establish the end organ harvesting act and to prohibit certain genetic technologies. **Senator Lenney** explained the bill prohibited insurance providers from issuing reimbursements for organ transplant operations performed in China or other countries known for participating in forced organ harvesting. The bill also prohibited hospitals and medical research facilities from using genetic sequencing machines or software manufactured by foreign adversaries. He explained that BGI, a Chinese company, was the largest manufacturer and was required to share the deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) data they acquired with the Chinese government. **Senator Lenney** yielded his time to Representative Redman.

Representatives Redman stated the bill took a stand and made a statement against the forced organ harvesting of dissidents and persecuted minority groups. It also protected the American citizens' DNA. This bill was truly a humanitarian bill as well as a health privacy bill. He said it should be noted this bill passed unanimously on the House floor.

TESTIMONY:

Hui He, Falun Dafa Association of Idaho, testified in support of **H 670**. She relayed that the practitioners of Falun Gong had been the primary victims of forced organ harvesting in China. Falun Gong was an ancient self-cultivation practice aimed at improving the mind and body through the principles of truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance. The Chinese Communist Party (party) perceived the widespread popularity of Falun Gong in the 1990s as a threat to its political power and control and as a result the Party started a brutal persecution against those who practiced Falun Gong. The gruesome practice was later extended to target Uyghurs and other vulnerable groups. Patients from the US had traveled to China for transplants due to shorter wait times. It was crucial to ensure that Idaho residents were not unknowingly complicit in the crime of forced organ harvesting.

Michael Lucci, Founder and CEO, State Armor Action, testified in support of **H 670**. He stated that removal of any American involvement in those heinous practices were necessary. Roughly 60,000 to 100,000 forced organ transplants occurred each year in China. The main companies in China that did genetic sequencing were directly affiliated with the military and had been added to the Department of Defense's 1260H list, which was a designation in the United States of America meaning it was a Chinese military company operating within the United States. He noted there was a congressional proposal with bipartisan support to ban reimbursement for genetic sequencing with federal dollars that would occur on those devices. The United States should disentangle our medical system from China's on organ transplantation and on genetic sequencing.

DISCUSSION:

Senator Harris inquired where the list of foreign adversaries came from that was listed under definitions on page two section three. **Representative Redman** explained it was from the State Department's Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) under 15 CFR 7.4. **Senator Taylor** asked for clarification on page three, line one about what happened in the future when a regime was not underneath that particular person's name any longer. **Senator Redman** stated the list was updated frequently through the State Department.

MOTION:

Senator Bjerke moved to send **H 670** to the floor with a do pass recommendation. **Senator Wintrow** seconded the motion. The motion passed by **voice vote**.

PRESENTATION:

Page Farewell: Alexis Marshall. **Chair VanOrden** thanked Alexis for her help this session. **Ms. Marshall** stated she enjoyed her time here. She had no idea it took so much work behind the scenes of a bill. She was sad to leave and go back to high school.

Chair VanOrden relayed there would be a joint Health and Welfare Committee meeting with the House on Tuesday at 8:00 a.m. which would be confirmed and details sent to the Committee.

ADJOURNED: There being no further business at this time, **Chair VanOrden** adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

Senator VanOrden
Chair

Lena Amoah
Secretary