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Scientists and biotechs opposed to biologics patent amendment

The scientific community and the biotechnology industry have both come out in opposition to the proposed amendments to the Patent Act that threaten to prohibit the patenting of any biological materials. The Australian Academy of Science (AAS) and AusBiotech have both made submissions to the Senate Inquiry into the Patent Amendment (Human Genes and Biological Materials) Bill 2010 arguing that the bill is too broad reaching and could hamper scientific research and the provision of new drugs and therapies to the public.

Others in the scientific community, such as head of Business Development at

the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute, Dr Julian Clark, have also come out arguing the amendments will not address community concerns about gene patenting and yet will seriously hamper scientific research.

The bill suggest amending the patent legislation to ban any "biological materials including their components and derivatives, whether isolated or purified or not and however made, which are identical or substantially identical to such materials as they exist in nature."

The Senate Inquiry is set to report its recommendations on June 16 this year.