



2001

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Recommended Citation

Starnpfle, Ryan (2001) "Maryland Legislative Summary: Senate Bill Two—Genetic Information—Non-Discrimination in Employment—Insurance," *University of Baltimore Law Forum*: Vol. 31 : No. 2 , Article 11.
Available at: <http://scholarworks.law.ubalt.edu/lf/vol31/iss2/11>

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**SENATE BILL TWO – GENETIC INFORMATION – NON-DISCRIMINATION IN
EMPLOYMENT – INSURANCE**

By Ryan Stampfle

Senate Bill Two, entitled “Genetic Information – Nondiscrimination in Employment – Insurance”, amends Article 49B – Human Relations Commission Sections 15 & 16 of the Annotated Code of Maryland and Section 27-909 of the Insurance Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. This Bill prohibits employers and health care insurers from discriminating on the basis of genetic information.

Section One of the Bill, which took effect on April 10, 2001, also makes illegal any discriminatory action, such as failing to hire an individual, discharging an employee, or otherwise discriminating against any person, with respect to their genetic information or because of their refusal to make available the results of genetic tests. Employers are also unable to require genetic testing or information for hiring purposes or for determining benefits.

Section Two of the Bill, which takes effect on October 1, 2001, makes it illegal for health care insurers to use genetic information, or request genetic services to reject, deny, limit, cancel, refuse to renew, increase the rates of, affect the terms or conditions of, or affect a health insurance contract. Disclosure of genetic information is only authorized to provide medical care and research.