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By: **The Speaker (By Request - Administration) and Delegates Aumann, Bartlett, Bohanan, Boschert, Boteler, Cluster, Cryor, Donoghue, Dwyer, Eckardt, Edwards, Elliott, Elmore, Frank, Gilleland, Haddaway, Hogan, Impallaria, Jennings, Kach, Kelly, Kohl, Krebs, Leopold, Mayer, McComas, McConkey, McDonough, McKee, McMillan, Miller, Morhaim, Myers, O'Donnell, Parrott, Shank, Shewell, Sossi, Stocksdale, Stull, Weir, Weldon, and Zirkin**

Introduced and read first time: January 25, 2006

Assigned to: Judiciary

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A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Maryland Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring a certificate of a qualified expert for each defendant in  
4 certain causes of action; altering certain provisions relating to the amount of  
5 time an expert may devote to certain activities; allowing the introduction of and  
6 consideration of certain evidence relating to damages under certain  
7 circumstances; requiring a court to appoint a neutral expert under certain  
8 circumstances; establishing a certain limitation on noneconomic damages for  
9 medical injuries for causes of action arising on or after a certain date; providing  
10 that this limitation applies in the aggregate to all claims arising from the same  
11 medical injury; requiring that a health care malpractice award or verdict be  
12 reduced to the extent of certain payments, reimbursements, or indemnification,  
13 less certain costs, under certain circumstances; prohibiting certain recovery and  
14 certain claims of subrogation relating to certain payments, reimbursements, or  
15 indemnification under certain circumstances; prohibiting a jury from being  
16 informed of certain limitations; requiring an award or verdict of economic  
17 damages for a medical injury to exclude certain amounts for past or future  
18 medical expenses and past or future loss of earnings; providing for the number  
19 of jurors in civil actions; altering the rate of interest on certain judgments;  
20 establishing a Task Force on Health Care Malpractice; providing for the  
21 composition, chairman, and staff of the Task Force; authorizing the Task Force  
22 to study any aspect of the health care, insurance, or civil justice systems related  
23 to health care malpractice; requiring the Task Force to report to the Governor  
24 and the General Assembly by a certain date; providing for the termination of the  
25 Task Force; altering the definition of a certain term; making stylistic changes;  
26 providing for the application of this Act; making the provisions of this Act  
27 severable; and generally relating to civil proceedings and medical injury  
28 compensation reform.

29 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

1 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings  
2 Section 3-2A-01(f)(1), 3-2A-04(b)(1)(i)1. and (4), 3-2A-05(h), (i), and (j),  
3 3-2A-06(f), (g), (h), and (i), 3-2A-09(a), 3-2A-10, 8-306, 10-920,  
4 11-107(a), and 11-108(e)  
5 Annotated Code of Maryland  
6 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

7 BY adding to  
8 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings  
9 Section 3-2A-05(j), 3-2A-06(g), 3-2A-09A, 3-2A-09B, and 9-124  
10 Annotated Code of Maryland  
11 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

12 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
13 Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings  
14 Section 11-108(c)  
15 Annotated Code of Maryland  
16 (2002 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

17 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
18 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

19 **Article - Courts and Judicial Proceedings**

20 3-2A-01.

21 (f) (1) "Health care provider" means a hospital, a related institution as  
22 defined in § 19-301 of the Health - General Article, a medical day care center, a  
23 hospice care program, an assisted living program, a freestanding ambulatory care  
24 facility as defined in § 19-3B-01 of the Health - General Article, a physician, an  
25 osteopath, an optometrist, a chiropractor, a registered or licensed practical nurse, a  
26 dentist, a podiatrist, a psychologist, a licensed certified social worker-clinical, [and]  
27 a physical therapist, OR A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT licensed or authorized to provide  
28 one or more health care services in Maryland.

29 3-2A-04.

30 (b) Unless the sole issue in the claim is lack of informed consent:

31 (1) (i) 1. Except as provided in subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph,  
32 a claim or action filed after July 1, 1986, shall be dismissed, without prejudice, if the  
33 claimant or plaintiff fails to file FOR EACH DEFENDANT a certificate of a qualified  
34 expert with the Director attesting to departure from standards of care, and that the  
35 departure from standards of care is the proximate cause of the alleged injury, within  
36 90 days from the date of the complaint;

1 (4) A health care provider who attests in a certificate of a qualified  
2 expert or who testifies in relation to a proceeding before an arbitration panel or a  
3 court concerning compliance with or departure from standards of care may not devote  
4 annually more than 20 percent of the expert's professional activities to activities that  
5 [directly involve testimony in personal injury claims]:

6 (I) ARE UNRELATED TO THE CARE OR TREATMENT OF A PATIENT;  
7 AND

8 (II) LEAD OR COULD LEAD TO TESTIMONY IN PERSONAL INJURY  
9 CLAIMS.

10 3-2A-05.

11 (h) [(1)] A party may apply to the arbitration panel to modify or correct an  
12 award as to liability, damages, or costs in accordance with § 3-222 of this title.

13 (I) (1) THIS SUBSECTION APPLIES TO A CAUSE OF ACTION ARISING BEFORE  
14 JUNE 1, 2006.

15 (2) (i) The application TO MODIFY OR CORRECT AN AWARD may  
16 include a request that damages be reduced to the extent that the claimant has been or  
17 will be paid, reimbursed, or indemnified under statute, insurance, or contract for all  
18 or part of the damages assessed.

19 (ii) The panel chairman shall receive such evidence in support and  
20 opposition to a request for reduction, including evidence of the cost to obtain such  
21 payment, reimbursement, or indemnity.

22 (iii) After hearing the evidence in support and opposition to the  
23 request, the panel chairman may modify the award if satisfied that modification is  
24 supported by the evidence.

25 (iv) The award may not be modified as to any sums paid or payable  
26 to a claimant under any workers' compensation act, criminal injuries compensation  
27 act, employee benefit plan established under a collective bargaining agreement  
28 between an employer and an employee or a group of employers and a group of  
29 employees that is subject to the provisions of the federal Employee Retirement  
30 Income Security Act of 1974, program of the Department of Health and Mental  
31 Hygiene for which a right of subrogation exists under §§ 15-120 and 15-121.1 of the  
32 Health - General Article, or as a benefit under any contract or policy of life insurance  
33 or Social Security Act of the United States.

34 (v) An award may not be modified as to any damages assessed for  
35 any future expenses, costs, and losses unless:

36 1. The panel chairman orders the defendant or the  
37 defendant's insurer to provide adequate security; or



1 INSURANCE COMMISSIONER TO ENSURE THE PAYMENT OF ALL FUTURE DAMAGES  
2 UP TO THE AMOUNT BY WHICH THE AWARD HAS BEEN MODIFIED IN THE EVENT  
3 THAT THE OTHER SOURCE OF COMPENSATION IS TERMINATED.

4 (5) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPHS (2) AND (3) OF THIS  
5 SUBSECTION OR AS EXPRESSLY PROVIDED BY FEDERAL LAW, A PERSON MAY NOT  
6 RECOVER FROM THE CLAIMANT OR ASSERT A CLAIM OF SUBROGATION AGAINST A  
7 DEFENDANT FOR ANY SUM INCLUDED IN THE MODIFICATION OF A VERDICT.

8 [(i)] (K) Subject to § 3-2A-06 of this subtitle, the award of the panel shall be  
9 final and binding on the parties. After the time for either rejecting or modifying the  
10 award has expired the Director may, or, when requested by any party, shall file a copy  
11 of the award with the circuit court having proper venue, as provided in Title 6,  
12 Subtitle 2 of this article and the court shall confirm the award. Upon confirmation the  
13 award shall constitute a final judgment.

14 [(j)] (L) Except for time limitations pertaining to the filing of a claim or  
15 response, the Director or the panel chairman, for good cause shown, may lengthen or  
16 shorten the time limitations prescribed in subsections (b) and (g) of this section and §  
17 3-2A-04 of this article.

18 3-2A-06.

19 (f) (1) THIS SUBSECTION APPLIES TO A CAUSE OF ACTION ARISING BEFORE  
20 JUNE 1, 2006.

21 (2) Upon timely request, the trier of fact shall by special verdict or  
22 specific findings itemize by category and amount any damages assessed for incurred  
23 medical expenses, rehabilitation costs, and loss of earnings. Damages assessed for  
24 any future expenses, costs, and losses shall be itemized separately. If the verdict or  
25 findings include any amount for such expenses, costs, and losses, a party filing a  
26 motion for a new trial may object to the damages as excessive on the ground that the  
27 plaintiff has been or will be paid, reimbursed, or indemnified to the extent and subject  
28 to the limits stated in § [3-2A-05(h)] 3-2A-05(I) of this subtitle.

29 [(2)] (3) The court shall hold a hearing and receive evidence on the  
30 objection.

31 [(3)] (4) (i) If the court finds from the evidence that the damages are  
32 excessive on the grounds stated in § [3-2A-05(h)] 3-2A-05(I) of this subtitle, subject  
33 to the limits and conditions stated in § [3-2A-05(h)] 3-2A-05(I) of this subtitle, it may  
34 grant a new trial as to such damages or may deny a new trial if the plaintiff agrees to  
35 a remittitur of the excess and the order required adequate security when warranted  
36 by the conditions stated in § [3-2A-05(h)] 3-2A-05(I) of this subtitle.

37 (ii) In the event of a new trial granted under this subsection,  
38 evidence considered by the court in granting the remittitur shall be admissible if  
39 offered at the new trial and the jury shall be instructed to consider such evidence in  
40 reaching its verdict as to damages.

1 (iii) Upon a determination of those damages at the new trial, no  
2 further objection to damages may be made exclusive of any party's right of appeal.

3 [(4)] (5) Except as expressly provided by federal law, no person may  
4 recover from the plaintiff or assert a claim of subrogation against a defendant for any  
5 sum included in a remittitur or awarded in a new trial on damages granted under this  
6 subsection.

7 [(5)] (6) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to otherwise limit  
8 the common law grounds for remittitur.

9 (G) (1) THIS SUBSECTION APPLIES TO A CAUSE OF ACTION ARISING ON OR  
10 AFTER JUNE 1, 2006.

11 (2) IN A TRIAL:

12 (I) A DEFENDANT MAY INTRODUCE EVIDENCE THAT THE  
13 PLAINTIFF HAS BEEN OR WILL BE PAID, REIMBURSED, OR INDEMNIFIED BY A  
14 GOVERNMENT OR THROUGH A GOVERNMENTAL PROGRAM, BY INSURANCE, OR  
15 UNDER CONTRACT FOR ALL OR PART OF THE DAMAGES ASSESSED; AND

16 (II) IF THE DEFENDANT INTRODUCES EVIDENCE UNDER ITEM (I)  
17 OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE PLAINTIFF MAY INTRODUCE EVIDENCE:

18 1. OF THE COST TO OBTAIN THE PAYMENT,  
19 REIMBURSEMENT, OR INDEMNITY; OR

20 2. THAT A PERSON OR A GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY HAS A  
21 RIGHT OF SUBROGATION FOR RECOVERY OF ANY COSTS PAID TO THE PLAINTIFF,  
22 AND THE AMOUNT OF THE SUBROGATED INTEREST.

23 (3) THE TRIER OF FACT SHALL CONSIDER THE EVIDENCE INTRODUCED  
24 UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION WHEN DECIDING THE ISSUE OF  
25 DAMAGES.

26 (4) (I) IF EVIDENCE IS INTRODUCED UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS  
27 SUBSECTION, EITHER PARTY MAY MOVE THAT THE VERDICT BE MODIFIED BASED ON  
28 THE EVIDENCE.

29 (II) THE COURT SHALL HOLD A HEARING ON THE MOTION.

30 (III) SUBJECT TO THIS SUBSECTION, AFTER CONSIDERING THE  
31 EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF AND OPPOSITION TO THE REQUEST, THE COURT SHALL  
32 MODIFY THE AWARD IF SATISFIED THAT MODIFICATION IS SUPPORTED BY THE  
33 EVIDENCE.

34 (5) A DEFENDANT MAY NOT INTRODUCE EVIDENCE CONCERNING ANY  
35 FUTURE EXPENSES, COSTS, AND LOSSES AND A VERDICT MAY NOT BE MODIFIED AS  
36 TO THESE DAMAGES UNLESS:

1 (I) THE COURT IS ASSURED THAT THE DEFENDANT OR THE  
2 DEFENDANT'S INSURER CAN PROVIDE ADEQUATE SECURITY AND, AFTER A VERDICT,  
3 ORDERS THE DEFENDANT OR THE DEFENDANT'S INSURER TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE  
4 SECURITY TO ENSURE THE PAYMENT OF ALL FUTURE DAMAGES UP TO THE AMOUNT  
5 BY WHICH THE AWARD HAS BEEN MODIFIED IN THE EVENT THAT THE OTHER  
6 SOURCE OF COMPENSATION IS TERMINATED; OR

7 (II) THE DEFENDANT'S INSURER IS AUTHORIZED TO DO BUSINESS  
8 IN THIS STATE AND MAINTAINS RESERVES IN COMPLIANCE WITH RULES OF THE  
9 INSURANCE COMMISSIONER TO ENSURE THE PAYMENT OF ALL FUTURE DAMAGES  
10 UP TO THE AMOUNT BY WHICH THE AWARD HAS BEEN MODIFIED IN THE EVENT  
11 THAT THE OTHER SOURCE OF COMPENSATION IS TERMINATED.

12 (6) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPHS (2) AND (4) OF THIS  
13 SUBSECTION OR AS EXPRESSLY PROVIDED BY FEDERAL LAW, A PERSON MAY NOT  
14 RECOVER FROM THE PLAINTIFF OR ASSERT A CLAIM OF SUBROGATION AGAINST A  
15 DEFENDANT FOR ANY SUM INCLUDED IN THE MODIFICATION OF A VERDICT.

16 [(g)] (H) If the verdict of the trier of fact is not more favorable to the party that  
17 rejected the arbitration panel's award, than was the award, the costs of the judicial  
18 proceedings shall be assessed against the rejecting party. Otherwise, the court may  
19 determine the assessment of such costs. If the court vacates an assessment of  
20 arbitration costs, it shall reassess those costs as justice requires.

21 [(h)] (I) Venue shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of §  
22 6-201 of this article.

23 [(i)] (J) The clerk of the court shall file a copy of the verdict or any other final  
24 disposition with the Director.

25 3-2A-09.

26 (a) This section applies to an award under § 3-2A-05 of this subtitle or a  
27 verdict under § 3-2A-06 of this subtitle for a cause of action arising on or after  
28 January 1, 2005, AND BEFORE JUNE 1, 2006.

29 3-2A-09A.

30 (A) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO A CLAIM OR CAUSE OF ACTION FILED ON OR  
31 AFTER JUNE 1, 2006.

32 (B) ON A MOTION BY A PARTY, A COURT SHALL EMPLOY A NEUTRAL EXPERT  
33 WITNESS TO TESTIFY ON THE ISSUE OF A PLAINTIFF'S ECONOMIC DAMAGES.

34 (C) UNLESS OTHERWISE AGREED TO BY THE PARTIES, A PARTY THAT MOVES  
35 TO EMPLOY A NEUTRAL EXPERT WITNESS SHALL PAY THE COSTS OF THE NEUTRAL  
36 EXPERT WITNESS WHO IS EMPLOYED UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH.

37 (D) NOTHING CONTAINED IN THIS SECTION LIMITS THE AUTHORITY OF A  
38 COURT CONCERNING A COURT'S WITNESS.

1 3-2A-09B.

2 (A) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO AN AWARD UNDER § 3-2A-05 OF THIS SUBTITLE  
3 OR A VERDICT UNDER § 3-2A-06 OF THIS SUBTITLE FOR A CAUSE OF ACTION ARISING  
4 ON OR AFTER JUNE 1, 2006.

5 (B) (1) AN AWARD OR VERDICT UNDER THIS SUBTITLE FOR NONECONOMIC  
6 DAMAGES MAY NOT EXCEED \$500,000.

7 (2) THE LIMITATION UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION  
8 SHALL APPLY IN THE AGGREGATE TO ALL CLAIMS FOR PERSONAL INJURY AND  
9 WRONGFUL DEATH ARISING FROM THE SAME MEDICAL INJURY, REGARDLESS OF  
10 THE NUMBER OF CLAIMS, CLAIMANTS, PLAINTIFFS, OR DEFENDANTS.

11 (C) (1) IN A JURY TRIAL, THE JURY MAY NOT BE INFORMED OF THE  
12 LIMITATION UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION.

13 (2) IF THE JURY AWARDS AN AMOUNT FOR NONECONOMIC DAMAGES  
14 THAT EXCEEDS THE LIMITATION ESTABLISHED UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS  
15 SECTION, THE COURT SHALL:

16 (I) REDUCE THE AMOUNT TO CONFORM TO THE LIMITATION; AND

17 (II) IF THE AWARD INCLUDES AMOUNTS FOR BOTH PAST AND  
18 FUTURE NONECONOMIC DAMAGES, REDUCE EACH AMOUNT PROPORTIONATELY TO  
19 THE TOTAL AWARD SO THAT THE TOTAL AWARD CONFORMS TO THE LIMITATION  
20 UNDER SUBSECTION (B)(1) OF THIS SECTION.

21 (3) IN A WRONGFUL DEATH ACTION IN WHICH THERE ARE TWO OR  
22 MORE CLAIMANTS OR BENEFICIARIES, IF THE JURY AWARDS AN AMOUNT FOR  
23 NONECONOMIC DAMAGES THAT EXCEEDS THE LIMITATION UNDER SUBSECTION (B)  
24 OF THIS SECTION OR A REDUCTION UNDER PARAGRAPH (4) OF THIS SUBSECTION,  
25 THE COURT SHALL:

26 (I) IF THE AMOUNT OF NONECONOMIC DAMAGES FOR THE  
27 PRIMARY CLAIMANTS, AS DESCRIBED UNDER § 3-904(D) OF THIS TITLE, EQUALS OR  
28 EXCEEDS THE LIMITATION UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION OR A  
29 REDUCTION UNDER PARAGRAPH (4) OF THIS SUBSECTION:

30 1. REDUCE EACH INDIVIDUAL AWARD OF A PRIMARY  
31 CLAIMANT PROPORTIONATELY TO THE TOTAL AWARD OF ALL PRIMARY CLAIMANTS  
32 SO THAT THE TOTAL AWARD TO ALL CLAIMANTS OR BENEFICIARIES CONFORMS TO  
33 THE LIMITATION OR REDUCTION; AND

34 2. REDUCE EACH AWARD, IF ANY, TO A SECONDARY  
35 CLAIMANT AS DESCRIBED UNDER § 3-904(E) OF THIS TITLE TO ZERO DOLLARS; OR

36 (II) IF THE AMOUNT OF NONECONOMIC DAMAGES FOR THE  
37 PRIMARY CLAIMANTS DOES NOT EXCEED THE LIMITATION UNDER SUBSECTION (B)

1 OF THIS SECTION OR A REDUCTION UNDER PARAGRAPH (4) OF THIS SUBSECTION OR  
2 IF THERE IS NO AWARD TO A PRIMARY CLAIMANT:

3                                   1.       ENTER AN AWARD TO EACH PRIMARY CLAIMANT, IF ANY,  
4 AS DIRECTED BY THE VERDICT; AND

5                                   2.       REDUCE EACH INDIVIDUAL AWARD OF A SECONDARY  
6 CLAIMANT PROPORTIONATELY TO THE TOTAL AWARD OF ALL OF THE SECONDARY  
7 CLAIMANTS SO THAT THE TOTAL AWARD TO ALL CLAIMANTS OR BENEFICIARIES  
8 CONFORMS TO THE LIMITATION OR REDUCTION.

9                   (4)       IN A CASE IN WHICH THERE IS A PERSONAL INJURY ACTION AND A  
10 WRONGFUL DEATH ACTION, IF THE TOTAL AMOUNT AWARDED BY THE JURY FOR  
11 NONECONOMIC DAMAGES FOR BOTH ACTIONS EXCEEDS THE LIMITATION UNDER  
12 SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, THE COURT SHALL REDUCE THE AWARD IN EACH  
13 ACTION PROPORTIONATELY SO THAT THE TOTAL AWARD FOR NONECONOMIC  
14 DAMAGES FOR BOTH ACTIONS CONFORMS TO THE LIMITATION.

15       (D)       (1)       AN AWARD OR VERDICT FOR PAST MEDICAL EXPENSES SHALL  
16 EXCLUDE ANY AMOUNT NOT ACTUALLY PAID BY OR ON BEHALF OF THE CLAIMANT  
17 OR PLAINTIFF OR ANY AMOUNT ACTUALLY OWED BY THE CLAIMANT OR PLAINTIFF  
18 TO A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.

19                   (2)       THE AWARD OR VERDICT FOR PAST OR FUTURE LOSS OF EARNINGS  
20 SHALL EXCLUDE ANY AMOUNT FOR FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL INCOME TAXES OR  
21 PAYROLL TAXES THAT THE CLAIMANT OR PLAINTIFF WOULD HAVE PAID ON THESE  
22 EARNINGS, DETERMINED AT THE TAX RATES IN EFFECT FOR THE CLAIMANT OR  
23 PLAINTIFF AT THE TIME THE AWARD OR VERDICT IS ENTERED.

24                   (3)       (I)       EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN THIS PARAGRAPH, AN  
25 AWARD OR VERDICT FOR FUTURE MEDICAL EXPENSES SHALL BE BASED SOLELY ON  
26 MEDICARE REIMBURSEMENT RATES IN EFFECT ON THE DATE OF THE AWARD OR  
27 VERDICT FOR THE LOCALITY IN WHICH THE CARE IS TO BE PROVIDED, ADJUSTED  
28 FOR INFLATION AS PROVIDED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (V) OF THIS PARAGRAPH.

29                   (II)       IF ON THE DATE OF THE AWARD OR VERDICT, THE MEDICARE  
30 WAIVER UNDER § 1814(B) OF THE FEDERAL SOCIAL SECURITY ACT IS IN EFFECT, AN  
31 AWARD OR VERDICT FOR FUTURE MEDICAL EXPENSES FOR HOSPITAL FACILITY  
32 SERVICES SHALL BE BASED SOLELY ON THE RATES APPROVED BY THE HEALTH  
33 SERVICES COST REVIEW COMMISSION IN EFFECT ON THE DATE OF THE AWARD OR  
34 VERDICT FOR THE HOSPITAL FACILITY IN WHICH SERVICES ARE TO BE PROVIDED,  
35 ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION AS PROVIDED IN THE ANNUAL RATE UPDATES APPROVED  
36 BY THE HEALTH SERVICES COST REVIEW COMMISSION.

37                   (III)       AN AWARD OR VERDICT FOR FUTURE MEDICAL EXPENSES FOR  
38 NURSING FACILITY SERVICES SHALL BE BASED SOLELY ON THE STATEWIDE  
39 AVERAGE PAYMENT RATE FOR THE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM DETERMINED  
40 BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE IN EFFECT ON THE DATE  
41 OF THE AWARD OR VERDICT, ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION AS PROVIDED IN  
42 SUBPARAGRAPH (V) OF THIS PARAGRAPH.

1 (IV) AN AWARD OR VERDICT FOR FUTURE ECONOMIC DAMAGES FOR  
2 WHICH THERE IS NO MEDICARE REIMBURSEMENT RATE, HOSPITAL FACILITY RATE,  
3 OR STATEWIDE AVERAGE PAYMENT SHALL BE BASED ON ACTUAL COST ON THE DATE  
4 OF THE AWARD OR VERDICT, ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION AS PROVIDED IN  
5 SUBPARAGRAPH (V) OF THIS PARAGRAPH.

6 (V) 1. FUTURE MEDICAL ECONOMIC DAMAGES SHALL BE  
7 ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION FOR THE EXPENDITURE CATEGORY OF THE CONSUMER  
8 PRICE INDEX PUBLISHED BY THE BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS TO WHICH THE  
9 EXPENSE APPLIES.

10 2. THE ADJUSTMENT FOR INFLATION UNDER  
11 SUBSUBPARAGRAPH 1 OF THIS SUBPARAGRAPH SHALL BE BASED ON THE AVERAGE  
12 RATE OF INFLATION FOR THE 5 YEARS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THE AWARD OR  
13 VERDICT.

14 3-2A-10.

15 Except as otherwise provided in §§ 3-2A-05, 3-2A-06, 3-2A-08A [and], 3-2A-09,  
16 AND 3-2A-09B of this subtitle, the provisions of this subtitle shall be deemed  
17 procedural in nature and may not be construed to create, enlarge, or diminish any  
18 cause of action not heretofore existing, except the defense of failure to comply with the  
19 procedures required under this subtitle.

20 8-306.

21 In a civil action in which a jury trial is permitted, the jury shall consist of AT  
22 LEAST 6 jurors.

23 9-124.

24 (A) IN A CIVIL ACTION, IF A COURT DETERMINES THAT SCIENTIFIC,  
25 TECHNICAL, OR OTHER SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE WILL ASSIST THE TRIER OF FACT  
26 TO UNDERSTAND THE EVIDENCE OR TO DETERMINE A FACT IN ISSUE, A WITNESS  
27 DETERMINED BY THE COURT TO BE QUALIFIED AS AN EXPERT BY KNOWLEDGE,  
28 SKILL, EXPERIENCE, TRAINING, OR EDUCATION MAY TESTIFY CONCERNING THE  
29 EVIDENCE OR FACT IN ISSUE IN THE FORM OF AN OPINION OR OTHERWISE ONLY IF  
30 THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET:

31 (1) THE TESTIMONY IS BASED ON SUFFICIENT FACTS OR DATA;

32 (2) THE TESTIMONY IS THE PRODUCT OF RELIABLE PRINCIPLES AND  
33 METHODS; AND

34 (3) THE WITNESS HAS APPLIED THE PRINCIPLES AND METHODS  
35 RELIABLY TO THE FACTS OF THE CASE.

36 (B) (1) IF A COURT CONSIDERS IT NECESSARY OR ON MOTION BY A PARTY,  
37 THE COURT MAY HEAR EVIDENCE REGARDING THE CRITERIA IN SUBSECTION (A) OF

1 THIS SECTION, INCLUDING HEARING TESTIMONY FROM THE PROPOSED EXPERT  
2 WITNESS.

3 (2) IF THE COURT DECIDES TO HEAR EVIDENCE REGARDING THE  
4 CRITERIA IN SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION, THE COURT SHALL HEAR THE  
5 EVIDENCE OUT OF THE PRESENCE OF A JURY.

6 10-920.

7 (a) In this section, "health care provider" has the meaning stated in § 3-2A-01  
8 of this article.

9 (B) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO AN EXPRESSION OF REGRET OR APOLOGY  
10 MADE IN WRITING, ORALLY, OR BY CONDUCT.

11 [(b)] (C) [(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, in] IN a  
12 proceeding subject to Title 3, Subtitle 2A of this article or a civil action against a  
13 health care provider, an expression of regret or apology made by or on behalf of the  
14 health care provider TO A VICTIM OF ALLEGED HEALTH CARE MALPRACTICE, ANY  
15 MEMBER OF THE VICTIM'S FAMILY, OR ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO CLAIMS DAMAGES BY  
16 OR THROUGH THAT VICTIM [, including an expression of regret or apology made in  
17 writing, orally, or by conduct,] is inadmissible as evidence of an admission of liability  
18 or as evidence of an admission against interest.

19 [(2) An admission of liability or fault that is part of or in addition to a  
20 communication made under paragraph (1) of this subsection is admissible as evidence  
21 of an admission of liability or as evidence of an admission against interest in an action  
22 described under paragraph (1) of this subsection.]

23 11-107.

24 (a) Except as provided in § 11-106 of this article, the legal rate of interest on  
25 a judgment shall be at the rate of [10 percent per annum on the amount of judgment]  
26 THE WEEKLY AVERAGE 1-YEAR CONSTANT MATURITY TREASURY YIELD, AS  
27 PUBLISHED BY THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM, FOR  
28 THE CALENDAR WEEK PRECEDING THE DATE OF THE JUDGMENT.

29 11-108.

30 (c) An award by the health claims arbitration panel in accordance with §  
31 3-2A-05 of this article for damages in which the cause of action arose before January  
32 1, 2005, shall be considered an award for purposes of this section.

33 (e) The provisions of this section do not apply to AN ARBITRATION AWARD OR  
34 a verdict under Title 3, Subtitle 2A of this article for damages in which the cause of  
35 action arises on or after January 1, 2005.

36 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

37 (a) There is a Task Force on Health Care Malpractice.

- 1 (b) The Task Force consists of the following members:
- 2 (1) the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene;
- 3 (2) the Insurance Commissioner;
- 4 (3) two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President  
5 of the Senate;
- 6 (4) two members of the House of Delegates appointed by the Speaker of  
7 the House; and
- 8 (5) the following members appointed by the Governor:
- 9 (i) a person with expertise in income tax law;
- 10 (ii) a lawyer with expertise in defending medical malpractice cases;
- 11 (iii) a lawyer with expertise in representing victims of medical  
12 malpractice;
- 13 (iv) a judge;
- 14 (v) a patient safety advocate;
- 15 (vi) an expert in structured settlements;
- 16 (vii) a physician;
- 17 (viii) a representative from a hospital or other health care facility;  
18 and
- 19 (ix) a representative of a medical malpractice insurer.
- 20 (c) The Governor shall designate the chairman of the Task Force from among  
21 the members.
- 22 (d) The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Maryland  
23 Insurance Administration shall provide staff for the Task Force.
- 24 (e) The Task Force may study any aspect of the health care, insurance, or civil  
25 justice systems related to health care malpractice liability, including:
- 26 (1) patient safety issues;
- 27 (2) structured compensation by periodic payments or annuities for future  
28 economic damages included in health care malpractice judgments;
- 29 (3) health care provided in compliance with the federal Emergency  
30 Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA);

- 1           (4)     qualifications for expert witnesses and criteria for expert witness  
2 testimony in health care malpractice actions;
- 3           (5)     calculation of economic damages in health care malpractice actions;
- 4           (6)     administrative compensation for a birth-related neurological injury;  
5 and
- 6           (7)     health care malpractice insurance reforms.

7     (f)     The Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the  
8 Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the  
9 General Assembly on or before December 15, 2007.

10    SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That §§ 3-2A-04(b)(1)1 and  
11 (4), 8-306, 9-124, and 11-107(a) of the Courts Article as enacted by this Act shall be  
12 construed to apply only prospectively and may not be applied or interpreted to have  
13 any effect on or application to any claim or case filed before the effective date of this  
14 Act.

15    SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That if any provision of this  
16 Act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid for any  
17 reason in a court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity does not affect other  
18 provisions or any other application of this Act which can be given effect without the  
19 invalid provision or application, and for this purpose the provisions of this Act are  
20 declared severable.

21    SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
22 June 1, 2006.