HOUSE BILL 317

C4 0lr1709

HB 406/09 - ECM

By: Delegates Holmes, Aumann, Barkley, Benson, Bobo, Cane, Carr, Davis, Doory, Elmore, Glenn, Griffith, Gutierrez, Healey, Hecht, Hixson, Howard, Ivey, Jennings, Kullen, McConkey, Montgomery, Murphy, Nathan-Pulliam, Niemann, Pena-Melnyk, Proctor, Ross, Smigiel, Sophocleus, Sossi, Tarrant, F. Turner, Valderrama, Vaughn, Waldstreicher, Walker, and Weir

Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2010

Assigned to: Economic Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

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Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund – Acceptance of Premiums on Installment Basis

FOR the purpose of authorizing the Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund to accept premiums on an installment basis under certain circumstances; requiring the Maryland Insurance Commissioner to ensure certain provisions of the Fund's installment payment plan; prohibiting the Fund from discriminating among insureds in a certain manner; prohibiting the Fund from paying a higher commission to certain producers; requiring certain written and electronic communications to include a certain statement under certain circumstances; requiring the Executive Director of the Fund, in consultation with the Commissioner and other State agencies, to develop certain criteria for a certain evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of the Fund's installment payment plan; requiring the Fund to determine certain information and the Board of Trustees of the Fund to certify the information to the Board of Directors of the Industry Automobile Insurance Association on or before a certain date each year; requiring the Executive Director of the Fund to submit on or before a certain date each year a certain report to the Commissioner; authorizing the Commissioner to make a certain determination under certain circumstances; requiring the Commissioner to retain a certain actuary and to hold a certain hearing under certain circumstances; requiring the Commissioner to make a certain determination on certain dates; requiring a premium finance company, in the event of a cancellation of a certain insurance policy, to credit to a certain account or refund to a certain insured a certain amount within a certain time; requiring an independent insurance producer to provide a certain disclosure under certain circumstances; requiring the Commissioner to study the



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1		enforcement of eligibility criteria for insurance coverage in the Fund; requiring
2		the Fund to provide certain information to the Office of Legislative Audits on or
3		before a certain date; requiring the Office to evaluate the overall costs of the
4		Fund's installment payment plan on or before a certain date; requiring the
5		Commissioner to submit certain reports; requiring the Office to submit a certain
6		report; providing for the application of certain provisions of this Act; providing
7		for the effective dates of this Act; making a certain technical correction; and
8		generally relating to accepting premiums on an installment basis on policies
9		issued by the Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund.
10	BY 1	repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
11		Article – Insurance
12		Section 20–101(a) and (g)
13		Annotated Code of Maryland
14		(2006 Replacement Volume and 2009 Supplement)

- BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments, 15
- 16 Article – Insurance
- 17 Section 20–404, 20–507, 23–304, and 23–505.2
- Annotated Code of Maryland 18
- 19 (2006 Replacement Volume and 2009 Supplement)
- 20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 21MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:
- 22Article - Insurance
- 23 20-101.
- 24In this title the following words have the meanings indicated. (a)
- 25(g) "Fund" means the Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund.
- 26 20-404.
- 27 On or before March 15 of each year, the Fund shall determine and the 28 Board of Trustees shall certify to the Board of Directors the information required 29 under subsections (b) [and], (c), AND (G)(1) of this section.
- 30 Subject to subsection (f) of this section, the following information certified (b) 31 to the Board of Directors shall be separately identified by commercial auto and private 32 passenger auto results:
- the statutory operating loss for the immediately preceding 33 (1) 34 calendar year;

- 1 a calculation to yield a private passenger auto assessment limit (2)2 that is determined by subtracting the year-end total surplus of the Fund for the 3 immediately preceding calendar year from an amount equal to 25% of the average of net direct written private passenger auto premiums of the Fund for each of the [three] 4 3 immediately preceding calendar years; and 5 6 a calculation to yield a commercial auto assessment limit that is 7 determined by subtracting the year-end commercial auto surplus of the Fund for the 8 immediately preceding calendar year from an amount equal to 25% of the average of 9 net direct written commercial auto premiums of the Fund for each of the 3 10 immediately preceding calendar years. 11 The assessment certified to the Board of Directors shall be equal to: (c) 12 subject to subsection (d) of this section, the assessment limit, if the (1) 13 assessment limit is less than or equal to the statutory operating loss; or 14 the statutory operating loss, if the assessment limit is greater than (2)the statutory operating loss. 15 16 (d) If the calculation under subsection (b)(2) of this section yields a number 17 that is less than or equal to zero, the assessment limit is zero. 18 The statutory operating loss or assessment certified to the Board of (e) 19 Directors may not include: 20 (1) assessment moneys received for a prior year; or 21moneys transferred between the commercial auto and private (2)22passenger auto divisions within the Fund. 23 In a calculation made under this section, income or expenses not clearly 24attributable to either commercial auto or private passenger auto may be allocated pro 25 rata for that year. 26 (G) **(1)** ON OR BEFORE MARCH 31 OF EACH YEAR, THE EXECUTIVE 27 DIRECTOR SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE COMMISSIONER ON: 28 **(I)** THE PRIOR YEAR-END TOTAL SURPLUS OF THE FUND; 29 **AND** 30 (II) THE PRIOR YEAR NET DIRECT WRITTEN PRIVATE
- 32 (2) (I) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (V) OF THIS 33 PARAGRAPH, AS THE COMMISSIONER DETERMINES NECESSARY, THE

PASSENGER AUTO PREMIUMS OF THE FUND.

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1 2	COMMISSIONER MAY MAKE A DETERMINATION AS TO WHETHER THE SURPLUS IS EXCESSIVE.
3 4	(II) IN MAKING A DETERMINATION AS TO WHETHER THE SURPLUS IS EXCESSIVE, THE COMMISSIONER SHALL:
5 6	1. RETAIN AN INDEPENDENT ACTUARY IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 7–307 OF THIS ARTICLE; AND
7	2. HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING.
8 9 10 11 12	(III) IF THE COMMISSIONER DETERMINES THAT THE SURPLUS IS EXCESSIVE, THE COMMISSIONER SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2–1246 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, TO THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE AND THE HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON:
13	1. THE STATUS OF THE SURPLUS; AND
14 15 16 17	2. THE COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATIONS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBPARAGRAPH (IV) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, FOR POTENTIAL DISTRIBUTIONS OF ANY EXCESS SURPLUS, INCLUDING PREMIUM RATE ADJUSTMENTS FOR FUND INSUREDS IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 20–507(D) OF THIS TITLE.
19 20	(IV) THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (III) OF THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL:
21	1. CONSIDER THE TRENDS OF THE:
22 23	A. ANNUAL YEAR-END TOTAL SURPLUS OF THE FUND; AND
24 25	B. ANNUAL NET DIRECT WRITTEN PRIVATE PASSENGER AUTO PREMIUMS OF THE FUND; AND
26	2. BE CONSISTENT WITH THE FACT THAT:

A.

INVESTMENT EARNINGS ON THOSE PREMIUMS;

SURPLUS

COMMERCIAL AUTO AND PRIVATE PASSENGER AUTO PREMIUMS AND THE

FUNDS

WERE

DERIVED

FROM

1 2 3	B. AN ADEQUATE LEVEL OF SURPLUS PROTECTS THE DRIVING PUBLIC FROM AN ASSESSMENT AUTHORIZED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE; AND
4 5	C. THE TOTAL SURPLUS GROWS AND DIMINISHES DEPENDING ON EXTERNAL MARKET FORCES.
6 7 8 9	(V) NOTWITHSTANDING SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE COMMISSIONER, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS PARAGRAPH, SHALL MAKE A DETERMINATION AS TO WHETHER THE SURPLUS IS EXCESSIVE AND SUBMIT A REPORT:
10	1. ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2010; AND
11 12 13 14	2. On or before October 1, 2013, or 2 years following the inception of the offering of an installment payment plan option by the Fund under § 20–507(g) of this title, whichever is later.
15 16	SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:
17	Article - Insurance
17 18	Article – Insurance 20–507.
18 19	20–507. (a) Subject to the approval of the Commissioner, the Executive Director shall
18 19 20 21 22	 (a) Subject to the approval of the Commissioner, the Executive Director shall determine the premiums to be charged on policies issued by the Fund. (b) (1) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, the provisions of Title 11, Subtitle 2 of this article apply to the determination of premiums by the
18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25	 (a) Subject to the approval of the Commissioner, the Executive Director shall determine the premiums to be charged on policies issued by the Fund. (b) (1) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, the provisions of Title 11, Subtitle 2 of this article apply to the determination of premiums by the Executive Director. (2) Notwithstanding Title 11, Subtitle 2 of this article or any other provision of this title, the Executive Director may base premiums on one or both of the

Premiums for all commercial coverage shall be determined in

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(1)

accordance with this section and § 20-508 of this subtitle.

- 1 (2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) of this subsection, the rating 2 principles under subsection (d) of this section may not be used to determine the 3 premium for commercial coverage.
- 4 (d) In reviewing rates filed by the Fund, the Commissioner shall consider not only the rating principles under Title 11, Subtitle 2 of this article but also the statutory purpose of the Fund under § 20–301 of this title.
- 7 (e) (1) The Motor Vehicle Administration and Executive Director may 8 arrange for the Motor Vehicle Administration to collect premiums on policies issued by 9 the Fund when the Motor Vehicle Administration issues a driver's license or certificate 10 of registration.
- 11 (2) A premium collected under this subsection shall be paid to the 12 State Treasurer for the account of the Fund.
- 13 (f) (1) The Fund may not:
- 14 (i) provide directly or indirectly for the financing of premiums; 15 or
- 16 (ii) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (G) OF THIS SECTION, accept premiums on an installment basis.
- 18 (2) A premium may be financed only by a premium finance company registered with the Commissioner in accordance with § 23–201 of this article.
- 20 (3) If a prospective insured's initial payment to the Fund, a fund producer, or premium finance company is not honored, a policy or endorsement issued in reliance on that payment is void.
- (G) (1) (I) SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE COMMISSIONER
 AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SUBSECTION, THE FUND MAY ACCEPT
 PREMIUMS ON AN INSTALLMENT BASIS ONLY ON 12-MONTH PERSONAL LINES
 POLICIES.
- 27 (II) IN APPROVING THE FUND'S PLAN FOR ACCEPTING 28 PREMIUMS ON AN INSTALLMENT BASIS, THE COMMISSIONER SHALL ENSURE 29 THAT THE FUND'S INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN:
- 1. REQUIRES AN INSURED'S INITIAL PREMIUM 31 PAYMENT TO BE NO LESS THAN 10% OF THE TOTAL PREMIUM;
- 32 **2.** IS STRUCTURED AND ADMINISTERED TO ENSURE 33 THAT THE FUND AT NO TIME PROVIDES INSURANCE COVERAGE TO AN INSURED

- 1 FOR A PERIOD DURING WHICH THE FUND HAS NOT RECEIVED THE
- 2 ACTUARIALLY JUSTIFIED PREMIUM PAYMENT;
- 3. OFFERS NO MORE THAN 12 INSTALLMENT
- 4 PAYMENTS ON THE 12-MONTH POLICY;
- 4. ALLOWS INSUREDS TO MAKE AN INITIAL PREMIUM
- 6 PAYMENT AND INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS IN ANY COMMERCIALLY ACCEPTABLE
- 7 FORM, WHICH SHALL INCLUDE PAYMENT BY CHECK, CREDIT CARD, OR
- 8 ELECTRONIC TRANSFER; AND
- 9 5. ALLOWS THE FUND TO IMPOSE AN
- 10 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSING FEE ON INSUREDS PARTICIPATING IN THE
- 11 INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN OF NO MORE THAN \$8 PER INSTALLMENT
- 12 PAYMENT.
- 13 (2) THE FUND MAY NOT DISCRIMINATE AMONG INSUREDS BY
- 14 CHARGING A DIFFERENT WRITTEN OR EARNED PREMIUM BASED ON THE
- 15 PAYMENT OPTION SELECTED BY AN INSURED OR ON WHETHER THE FUND
- 16 PRODUCER IS EMPLOYED BY A PUBLIC ENTITY OR PRIVATE ENTITY.
- 17 (3) THE FUND MAY NOT PAY A HIGHER COMMISSION TO A FUND
- 18 PRODUCER WHO PLACES AN INSURED IN AN INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN
- 19 OVER ANY OTHER PAYMENT OPTION, INCLUDING A PREMIUM FINANCE
- 20 AGREEMENT.
- 21 (4) (I) IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS PARAGRAPH, WRITTEN AND
- 22 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS, INCLUDING THE FUND'S WEBSITE, AFFECTING
- 23 THE PLACEMENT OF COVERAGE BY THE FUND OR A FUND PRODUCER SHALL
- 24 INCLUDE A STATEMENT, ON A FORM APPROVED BY THE COMMISSIONER,
- 25 ADVISING AN APPLICANT OR AN INSURED OF THE PAYMENT OPTIONS
- 26 AVAILABLE TO THE APPLICANT OR THE INSURED.
- 27 (II) THE STATEMENT SHALL STATE THAT THE APPLICANT
- 28 OR INSURED HAS THE FOLLOWING PAYMENT OPTIONS:
- 29 1. THE FUND'S INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN;
- 30 2. A PREMIUM FINANCE AGREEMENT; OR
- 3. PAYMENT OF THE POLICY IN FULL.
- 32 (III) THE STATEMENT SHALL BE INCLUDED ON WRITTEN OR
- 33 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AT THE TIME THE APPLICANT OR INSURED:

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1	1. IS ISSUED A NEW POLICY;
2 3	2. IS ISSUED A REISSUANCE, REWRITE, OR RENEWAY OF AN EXISTING POLICY; OR
4 5	3. INCURS ADDITIONAL PREMIUMS UNDER ADDITION
6 7 8	(IV) THE STATEMENT SHALL STATE THAT THE APPLICANT OR INSURED SHOULD CONSULT A FUND PRODUCER WHO WILL FULLY DESCRIBED THE TERMS OF EACH PAYMENT OPTION.
9 10 11 12	(5) (I) THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE COMMISSIONER AND OTHER STATE AGENCIES AS APPROPRIATE, SHALL DEVELOP CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE IMPACT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FUND'S INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN.
13 14	(II) THE EVALUATION SHALL INCLUDE THE IMPACT OF THE PLAN ON:
15	1. THE COST OF AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE;
16 17	2. THE NUMBER OF INSURED AND UNINSURED MOTORISTS IN THE STATE;
18 19	3. THE NUMBER OF POLICIES IN FORCE BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA;
20	4. THE DURATION OF POLICIES IN FORCE; AND
21 22 23	5. THE FREQUENCY OF PAYMENT METHODS USED BY INSUREDS, INCLUDING THE FUND'S INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN, PREMIUM FINANCE AGREEMENTS, AND CASH AND CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS.
24 25 26	(III) ON OR BEFORE MARCH 31 OF EACH YEAR, THE FUND SHALL REPORT TO THE COMMISSIONER ON THE IMPACT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FUND'S INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN FOR THE PRIOR YEAR BASED ON:
27 28	1. THE EVALUATION CRITERIA DEVELOPED UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH; AND

THE LIMITATIONS OF THE TERMS OF THE PLAN

2.

UNDER PARAGRAPH (1)(II)1 AND 3 OF THIS SUBSECTION.

- ON RECEIPT OF THE REPORT UNDER PARAGRAPH 1 **(6)** (I)
- 2 (5)(III)OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE COMMISSIONER SHALL
- 3 DETERMINATION ON THE IMPACT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FUND'S
- INSTALLMENT PLAN, INCLUDING A REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY THE 4
- COMMISSIONER RELATING TO THE FUND'S INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN AND 5
- 6 TO PREMIUM FINANCE AGREEMENTS.
- 7 ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1 OF EACH YEAR, THE (II)
- 8 COMMISSIONER SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2–1246 OF
- THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, TO THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE 9
- 10 AND THE HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTERS COMMITTEE ON:
- 11 1. THE IMPACT AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FUND'S
- 12INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN; AND
- 2. 13 THE COMMISSIONER'S DETERMINATION UNDER §
- 20-404(G)(2)(I) OF THIS SUBTITLE. 14
- 15 23–505.2.
- 16 An insurer that markets through independent insurance producers as defined in this article may not discriminate, intimidate, or retaliate against an
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- 18 insurance producer or insured that uses premium financing by denying the insurance
- 19 producer or insured the same rights accorded to insurance producers or insureds who
- 20 pay premiums in a different manner.
- 21 (b) **(1)** With respect to personal lines automobile insurance OTHER THAN
- 22 INSURANCE WRITTEN THROUGH THE MARYLAND AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE
- 23 FUND, an independent insurance producer, who directly or indirectly has an
- 24ownership interest in a premium finance company, shall provide a disclosure to be
- signed by the insured comparing the costs and terms of premium financing with the 25
- 26insurer's alternative payment plan.
- 27 **(2)** WITH RESPECT TO PERSONAL LINES AUTOMOBILE
- 28INSURANCE WRITTEN THROUGH THE MARYLAND AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE
- 29 INSURANCE PRODUCER SHALL FUND, AN INDEPENDENT PROVIDE
- 30 DISCLOSURE TO BE SIGNED BY THE INSURED COMPARING THE COSTS AND
- TERMS OF PREMIUM FINANCING AND THE FUND'S INSTALLMENT PAYMENT 31
- 32 PLAN.

- (c) The disclosure required by subsection (b) of this section shall:
- 34 state the total amount to be paid by the insured under the (1)
- 35 premium finance agreement during the policy term, including premium, any down

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House Economic Matters Committee:

- payment, and all interest, fees, and charges incident to the premium finance 1 2 agreement and resulting extension of credit; and 3 state the total amount to be paid by the insured under the 4 insurer's alternative payment plan during the policy term, including premium, any 5 down payment, and all fees and charges incident to the alternative payment plan. 6 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland 7 read as follows: Article - Insurance 8 9 23-304. 10 (A) The finance charge shall be computed: (1) 11 on the amount of the entire premium loan advanced, including any taxes or fees that are financed under § 23–301.1 of this subtitle, after subtracting any 12 13 down payment on the premium loan made by the insured; 14 (2)from the inception date of the insurance contract or from the due 15 date of the premium, disregarding any grace period or credit allowed for payment of the premium, through the date when the final installment under the premium finance 16 agreement is payable; and 17 at a rate not exceeding 1.15% for each 30 days, charged in advance. 18 (3) 19 IN THE EVENT OF A CANCELLATION OF A MARYLAND AUTOMOBILE (B) INSURANCE FUND POLICY, THE PREMIUM FINANCE COMPANY, WITHIN 15 DAYS 20 AFTER RECEIPT OF THE UNEARNED PREMIUM ON THE POLICY OF AN INSURED, 2122 SHALL CREDIT TO THE INSURED'S ACCOUNT OR REFUND TO THE INSURED: 23 **(1)** ANY UNEARNED PREMIUMS DUE UNDER THE POLICY; AND 24**(2)** ANY UNEARNED FINANCE CHARGES, CALCULATED BY THE 25 ACTUARIAL METHOD. 26 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That: 27 On or before December 31, 2010, the Maryland Insurance Commissioner shall study the enforcement of eligibility criteria for insurance coverage in the 2829 Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund and submit a report, in accordance with §
 - (b) The study of the enforcement of eligibility criteria for insurance coverage in the Fund shall include:

2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the Senate Finance Committee and the

- 1 (1) the effectiveness of current procedures to enforce the requirement 2 that applicants be declined coverage by at least two private automobile insurers;
- 3 (2) the number and percentage of Fund insureds with continuous 4 coverage in the Fund for a period of more than 1 year; and
- 5 (3) the number and percentage of Fund insureds with continuous 6 coverage in the Fund for a period of more than 1 year and with no moving violations or 7 chargeable accidents; and
- 8 (c) The report shall include the Commissioner's findings and 9 recommendations to encourage Fund insureds to obtain coverage from private 10 insurers.

SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

- 12 (a) On or before March 1, 2012, the Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund 13 shall provide to the Office of Legislative Audits a report on the Fund's installment 14 payment plan from its inception of the offering of the installment payment plan 15 through December 31, 2011, which includes:
- 16 (1) the number and cost of full-time and part-time Fund employees 17 used;
- 18 (2) the costs of establishing the program, including consultants and vendors, new software purchased, modified, or developed internally, and new 20 hardware and other physical plant added;
- 21 (3) the costs of operating the program, including printing, mailing, 22 payment processing, and management;
- 23 (4) the reduction in investment income caused by implementation of the installment payment plan billing;
- 25 (5) the amount of earned but uncollected premium and costs 26 associated with collecting bad debt;
- 27 (6) the payment methods used by insureds, including the extent to 28 which insureds use the Fund's installment payment plan, premium finance 29 agreements, credit cards, and cash payments; and
- 30 (7) any other pertinent information the Office requests from the Fund 31 or the Maryland Insurance Commissioner.
- 32 (b) On or before June 30, 2012, the Office of Legislative Audits shall evaluate 33 the overall costs of the Fund's installment payment plan and submit a report, in

- accordance with § 2–1246 of the State Government Article, to the Senate Finance Committee and the House Economic Matters Committee.
- SECTION 6. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 2 of this Act shall take effect October 1, 2010, and shall apply to all policies and contracts issued by the Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund on or after October 1, 2010.
- SECTION 7. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 3 of this Act shall take effect July 1, 2011, and shall apply to all premium finance agreements entered into on or after July 1, 2011.
- 9 SECTION 8. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, except as provided in Sections 6 and 7 of this Act, this Act shall take effect July 1, 2010.