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INTERNAL MEDICINE

PEDIATRICS

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February 26, 2024

Re: Senate Bill 914 FIRST PRESENTATION 2/29/24 1:00 PM

Written TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF THIS BILL

Human Relations – Protections Against Discrimination – Genetic Procedures

I am a practicing Internist and Pediatrician who has an interest in the effects of the environment on a person's well-being. I have practiced continuously in Maryland since July 24, 1978.

With the unlocking of the genetic code, medical conditions have been identified that can be explained or confirmed by genetic testing.

The susceptibility of individuals to disease depends on their genetics and their interaction with their environment. For healthcare professionals who investigate these interactions, genetic testing is an invaluable technique that adds to making a previously unknown medical condition knowable.

The genetic discovery can contribute to understanding and modifications of treatments, and the consequences of treatments.

Each individual's genetic information is relatively unique and **personal**. That is much like having your assigned social security number. A person can voluntarily seek their genetic information with testing devices that discover one's ancestry. A person can freely disclose genetic information if it may be helpful in diagnosing a relative's medical condition.

On the other hand, to **REQUIRE** dispensing or releasing genetic information as a condition for their interaction with various organizations WOULD VIOLATE their INDIVIDUAL FREEDOMS.

Mis-use and mis-handling of genetic information by uninformed or misinformed persons in a powerful position could contribute to discrimination based on gender, or trans-gender, or medical conditions that may be classified as impairments under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

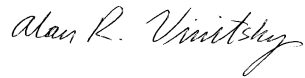
In addition, mis-use of genetic information could countermand the completion of an individual's application for school, employment, use of facilities, or ancestry.

By contrast, REFUSING to accept GENETIC TESTING SHOULD NOT BE A CRITERION when deciding an individual's status when evaluating an application.

Therefore, it is an individual's (or designated representative's) prerogative to choose to release genetic information. IT MUST NOT BE A REQUIREMENT that a person release genetic information as a condition for the individual's interaction with outside organizations.

Furthermore, that individual must not be penalized (or discriminated against) for CHOOSING TO MAINTAIN THEIR GENETIC INFORMATION PRIVATELY OR CHOOSING **NOT** TO DISCOVER their genetic information.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alan R. Vinitsky".

Alan R. Vinitsky, M.D.