

The Honorable Bradley S. Schneider
U.S. House of Representatives
1432 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Schneider,

On behalf of the people, I am proposing that you consider the proposed amendment to the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, or GINA. Because you were a member on the House Committee for the Judiciary, I believe that it would be very congenial to consider the amendment from an ethical standpoint – to prevent discrimination and advance civil rights – in mind when making the decision.

With the standardization and widespread availability of genetic testing becoming more prevalent in our society due to SNP analysis, it is reasonable that life, disability, and long-term care insurance companies will make use of their clients' medical records to determine their eligibility or premiums. This is not only detrimental to those who need insurance most but also to scientific research; to avoid having their access to medical care and career aspirations jeopardized, individuals with rare genetic diseases may decline to participate in the genetic testing that is needed to cure such diseases in the long-run.

Because the law is currently established in the books in a non-comprehensive manner that does not require certain insurers and the military from denying coverage and employment based on genetic test results, it does not protect the minority of people who have genetic conditions from discrimination. Regardless of their susceptibility to such diseases, the majority of people believe that privacy with respect to medical records belongs among the litany of records that insurance companies and the military must not use to their advantage.

Although the amendment would not improve my own access to insurance, no person should have to forego coverage due only to the fact that they have a preexisting genetic condition that is outside of their control. For members of the military, their genetic test results must not be made a defining criterion for evaluating their character and ability to serve. With consideration to those who are denied life insurance coverage due to their medical records, I respectfully request that you consider supporting the passage of our proposed amendment to the bill as such circumstances become mainstream.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Sincerely,
Dean Gladish

3834 Lizette Ln.
Glenview, IL 60026
gladishd@carleton.edu