

than three percentum (3%) of the registered voters who are eligible to vote for the office for which such nomination by petition is sought. The number of registered voters shall be determined as of the commencement of the [six-month] FOUR MONTH period before the primary election for which the nomination is sought. Candidates nominated by petition must pay the fee prescribed in § 6A-6 of this article in the same manner as candidates for nomination at a primary election, with the filing of the certificate of candidacy of the candidate. Such fees shall be disposed of in the same manner as provided in § 4A-8 of this article.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 1973.

Approved May 24, 1973.

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CHAPTER 706

(Senate Bill 734)

AN ACT to add new Section 12 to Article 79 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1969 Replacement Volume and 1972 Supplement), title "Releases and Receipts," to follow immediately after Section 11 thereof, prohibiting the obtaining of settlements, releases, statements and contingent fee agreements or their solicitation from certain injured persons under certain circumstances.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That new Section 12 be and it is hereby added to Article 79 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1969 Replacement Volume and 1972 Supplement), title "Releases and Receipts," to follow immediately after Section 11 thereof, and to read as follows:

12.

(A) NO PERSON WHOSE INTEREST IS OR MAY BECOME ADVERSE TO AN INJURED PERSON WHO IS CONFINED TO A HOSPITAL OR SANITARIUM AS A PATIENT SHALL, WITHIN FIFTEEN DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THE OCCURRENCE CAUSING THE PERSON'S INJURY: (I) NEGOTIATE OR ATTEMPT TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT WITH THE INJURED PATIENT; OR (II) OBTAIN OR ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN A GENERAL RELEASE OF LIABILITY FROM THE INJURED PATIENT; OR (III) OBTAIN OR ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN ANY STATEMENT, EITHER WRITTEN OR ORAL FROM THE INJURED PATIENT II FOR USE IN NEGOTIATING A SETTLEMENT OR OBTAINING A RELEASE.

(B) ANY SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO II OR ANY GENERAL RELEASE OF LIABILITY I OR ANY WRITTEN OR ORAL STATEMENT MADE BY ANY PERSON WHO IS CONFINED IN A HOSPITAL OR SANITARIUM AFTER HE INCURS A PERSONAL INJURY WHICH IS OBTAINED CONTRARY TO THE PROVISIONS OF (A) HEREOF SHALL NOT BE EVIDENTIAL IN ANY COURT ACTION RELATING TO THE INJURY AND SHALL NOT BE UTILIZED FOR ANY PURPOSE IN ANY LEGAL ACTION IN CONNECTION THEREWITH.

II(C) WHERE A PERSON IS INJURED AND CONFINED TO A HOSPITAL OR SANITARIUM DUE TO SAID INJURIES, NO ATTORNEY, DURING THE FIRST FIFTEEN DAYS OF SAID PERSON'S