~~SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall apply to health benefit plans subject to this Act that are issued, delivered, or renewed in the State on or after October 1, 2005.~~

(a) There is a Joint Legislative Task Force on Small Group Market Health Insurance.

(b) The Task Force consists of the following ~~eight~~ *six* members:

(1) ~~four~~ *three* members of the Senate Finance Committee, appointed by the President of the Senate; and

(2) ~~four~~ *three* members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

(c) (1) The President of the Senate shall appoint a co–chair from among the Senate Finance Committee members~~; and~~.

(2) The Speaker of the House shall appoint a co–chair from among the House Health and Government Operations Committee members.

(d) (1) The Department of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the Task Force~~; and~~.

(2) The Maryland Insurance Administration and the Maryland Health Care Commission shall provide technical assistance to the Task Force, including retaining independent consultants to provide actuarial services, benefit consulting services, and other services as needed.

(e) A member of the Task Force:

(1) may not receive compensation; but

(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(f) The Task Force ~~shall~~:

(1) *shall* study and make recommendations regarding small group market health insurance, including:

(i) the use of health status as a risk factor for rate adjustment purposes;

(ii) the permissible variation in the community rate;

(iii) ~~excluding self–employed individuals;~~

~~(iv)~~ expanding the permissible range of products;

~~(v) the benefits included in the Comprehensive Standard Health Benefit Plan;~~

~~(vi)~~ *(iv)* the ~~take–up rate for~~ *number of employers offering* the Limited Benefit Plan;