

## Dangers of legal genetic discrimination in Canada

Protecting members of our society from discrimination based on the colour of their skin, ethnicity, or ancestry is a fundamental Canadian value. Unfortunately, Canadians across the country currently face real as well as potential future discrimination based on their DNA. Genetic discrimination is a reality in Canada, with out-dated laws enabling insurance companies and employers to target individuals and families based on the results of genetic testing.

To date, science has outpaced legislation in Canada, despite broad, multi-partisan consensus supporting action to stop genetic discrimination. Prime Minister Stephen Harper pledged to “prevent employers and insurance companies from discriminating against Canadians on the basis of genetic testing” in the last [Speech from the Throne](#); an NDP [Private Member’s Bill](#) has been introduced in the House of Commons to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to prohibit genetic discrimination; and the [Canadian Coalition for Genetic Fairness](#) testified this week at the Senate human rights committee regarding Liberal Senator James Cowan’s [Bill S-201: An Act to Prohibit and Prevent Genetic Discrimination](#).

In the early 1990s when the Global Genome Project began, Canada joined other countries in a dialogue about its possible outcomes and the potential need for safeguarding genetic information. At the time, Canada opted to take a “wait and see” approach. Nearly 25 years have passed, and ours is now the only G7 nation that does not protect genetic information.

**Read full original article:** [Genetic Discrimination Means the Difference Between Life and Life Insurance](#)