



April 13, 2026

The Honorable Robert Britto
Chair, Senate Commerce Committee
State of Rhode Island General Assembly
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Senate Bill 2203 (Genetic Privacy) - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Britto:

Ancestry is the largest family history and consumer genomics company in the world. We empower journeys of personal discovery to enrich lives by combining billions of rich historical records, millions of family trees, and samples from millions of people in the AncestryDNA network to help our customers discover their unique place in history.

Over the past decade, Rhode Islanders have taken a strong interest in various direct-to-consumer genetic testing products. These services can give consumers insights into their health, wellness, and family history based on genetic data extracted from a saliva sample they provide to private companies like ours.

Ancestry, recognizing the sensitive nature of their consumers' genetic data, has carefully considered the privacy and data protection issues incumbent with direct-to-consumer genetic testing services. We support having safeguards in place that ensure consumers are aware of their privacy practices, have control over their data, and can provide separate, express consent before their data is shared.

The Future of Privacy Forum, working with leading consumer privacy advocates, policymakers, and Ancestry, 23andMe, MyHeritage, and other genetic testing companies promulgated the Privacy Best Practices for Direct-to-Consumer Genetic Testing Services in 2018. When states began to discuss codifying privacy protections for consumer genetic data shortly after, the Best Practices were translated into model state legislation. Thirteen states have passed that bill so far: Alabama, Arizona, California, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Wyoming – with more states joining the list every year.

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Ancestry is pleased to support S 2203, and its companion H 7639, given its adherence to the work of the Future of Privacy Forum and others who have proposed the adoption of appropriate safeguards to provide rational safeguards for consumers' genetic data. The bill ensures that Rhode Island consumers are in control of their genetic data at all times, and would require all of the following:

- Separate express consent before DNA is extracted from a biological sample and analyzed.
- Separate express consent before a biological sample is stored.
- Separate express consent for genetic data to be used for research purposes.
- Separate express consent for genetic data to be shared with a third party.
- Separate express consent for genetic data to be used for marketing purposes.
- Genetic testing companies may not share genetic data with employers or providers of insurance for any reason without written consent (Ancestry does not provide genetic data to these entities at all).
- Genetic testing companies must provide consumers with a means to delete their genetic data from their database and close their accounts without unnecessary steps.
- Genetic testing companies must delete a consumer's biological sample upon request.
- Genetic testing companies must provide clear and complete information about their privacy practices and protocols.

We are proud of your work to provide customers with straightforward privacy policies that empower them to control how their genetic data is used. We respectfully urge relevant Rhode Island's General Assembly Committees to consider S 2203 to ensure Rhode Island consumers have privacy protections for their genetic data, regardless of the testing service they use.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ritchard A. Engelhardt".

Ritchard Engelhardt
Head of Government Affairs
Ancestry