

General Info & Instructions:

Bill information:

This session, nearly all statewide healthcare organizations are fighting to establish Medicaid coverage for undocumented immigrants. **HB 5251: “AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS IN THIS STATE”** is a bill that would aid in doing this. It is currently raised in the Insurance and Real Estate Committee, and there was a public hearing for it at 11:00 am this morning (Tuesday, February 25). More information on this bill from the CGA website can be found [here](#).

Many statewide groups, such as Health Equity Solutions, the CT Health Policy Project, and Planned Parenthood are involved in advocating for this bill. Much of sample testimony language included here has been provided by these organizations, with instructions below on how to modify it and **make it personal/compelling**.

Testimony instructions:

1. Write your testimony based on the sample given below: further instructions/places to add in your own writing are in **red** text!
 2. Email your testimony to instestimony@cga.ct.gov
 - a. The subject line should be: “HB5251 - YOUR NAME”
 3. If you know anyone outside of Dems who would be interested in submitting testimony, please send them this document and encourage them to write & submit.
 4. Please send this as soon as possible. If you do not finish your testimony within this meeting, please try to have it sent ASAP (ideally, by the end of the day tomorrow).
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Testimony template:

Dear Members of the Insurance and Real State Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Abigail Leighton, and I am a college freshman. I am an ally of the immigrant community and I stand in support of **HB5251- AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS IN THIS STATE**. This bill would create a task force to study the current state of healthcare access for undocumented immigrants, and to promote increased insurance coverage for these communities.

Better access to healthcare for undocumented immigrants is not alone humane, it would improve the health of the entire community. It would also save the state money in the long run, because undocumented immigrants would be able to take advantage of preventative and early intervention healthcare, instead of waiting for emergencies to arrive.

The establishment of this task force is a *critical* step that our state must take in favor of *saving lives*. Being undocumented does not make any individual less deserving of healthcare, or any other basic

human right. Citizenship status should not be a determinant of health and wellness — but by limiting undocumented individuals' access to healthcare, the state of Connecticut is perpetuating health disparities and systemic inequities within communities of color. This is no longer a matter of policy alone: this is a matter of life and death.

Expanding HUSKY coverage to undocumented immigrants is necessary, but this expansion must be done thoughtfully and with immigrants' lived experiences in mind. To this end, the task force cannot be comprised of politicians alone: diverse voices and representatives from advocacy organizations are key to the success of this task force. For this reason, we ask that individuals from groups such as the Connecticut Immigrants Rights Alliance, Connecticut Students for a Dream, the Universal Health Care Foundation, and Health Equity Solutions be included in the task force.

In conclusion, I would like to restate my strong support for HB5251. The state of Connecticut cannot remain complicit in systemic discrimination against immigrant communities — they are *people* worthy of dignity and respect, and must be treated as such. The establishment of this task force is the least our state can do, and I ask the committee to vote favorably on this important and necessary measure.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Abigail Leighton