

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

My name is BriAnna Nixie, and I am a junior at the University of Connecticut. I am a Generation Action intern with Planned Parenthood Votes! Connecticut. I live in Glastonbury, Connecticut, and I am a constituent of Representative Jill Barry and Senator Steve Cassano. I am writing to express my support for House Bill 5251: *An Act Establishing a Task Force to Study Health Insurance Coverage for Undocumented Immigrants in This State*. This bill would create a taskforce with the objective to study any means available to promote and increase health insurance coverage for undocumented immigrants in the state.

I have been an advocate for health insurance coverage for undocumented immigrants since learning of my immigrant friends' experiences in and feelings toward healthcare due to their lack of health insurance coverage. For financial reasons *and* out of fear of deportation or other legal consequences, these friends and their families often do not go to the doctor when sick. They live in fear of ever needing emergency or other serious medical care.

It is important to both acknowledge *and* understand healthcare as a human right. It should not be only for privileged, wealthy, or native-born Americans. No human being deserves to be denied or face obstacles in obtaining healthcare services that they need because of immigration status or length of residency. The immigrant community in our state faces discrimination in healthcare, and this is a violation of human rights.

HB 5251 will create a significant, impactful taskforce within the state of Connecticut. This will lead to very useful data in further creating and improving policies, in order to help increase access to healthcare coverage for undocumented immigrants in our state. This taskforce should study the issue of healthcare access for undocumented immigrants, as well as other groups of immigrants ineligible for HUSKY or other forms of health insurance coverage in Connecticut because of their immigration status. This taskforce should research and analyze the cost of expanding HUSKY A, B, C, and D coverage for all immigrants regardless of immigration status or length of residency. To make sure that this taskforce is listening to the voices of immigrant communities, it needs to include a representative from an immigrant rights advocacy organization and a representative from a healthcare advocacy organization.

I want to reiterate my support for HB 5251. Passing this bill forward will benefit families all across Connecticut. Let's work together to create more awareness around health insurance coverage for undocumented immigrants and to change these policies for the better.

Thank you for your time,
BriAnna Nixie (she/her/hers)
158 Candlelight Drive, Glastonbury, CT 06033