

February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Hartford CT

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

My name is Constanza Segovia, I am a resident from Hartford, CT. I am an immigrant to this country and state, 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 taskforce with the objective to study of any means available to promote and increase health insurance coverage for undocumented immigrants in the state.

My family and I have been in Connecticut for the past 20 years. I was born in Argentina and we all came together to access a more dignified life and a better future for my brother who is autistic and didn't have access to a lot of support back home. Even though we are now US citizens, it's never been easy to access health insurance. We had no idea that it would be so hard, and had zero familiarity with the US immigration system before coming here.

The reality of our situation is that my brother was never able to access the support that we know exists in this country. Because of his immigration status, he hasn't been able to qualify for most services that exist. Because of the language barrier, we are not able to engage with most family support groups, or social activities available for others like him.

For years, we never went to the doctor. I am 37 years old and had an annual checkup for the first time when I was 35. The cost of visiting a doctor when you're undocumented makes it so that you just don't go. You don't go when you're sick, of course you won't go for preventative visits! When my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer a few years ago, we were terrified. But we knew how much worse it would have been had she not received her green card right before it happened. It would have put our whole family in crippling debt. That treatment saved her life, and access to it should not be determined by her immigration status.

Right now, I know so many people who are in the situation that we used to be in. Access to healthcare is a HUMAN RIGHT, we cannot let people DIE because of their immigration status. HB5251 is urgent. It's urgent for our immigrant community and also to the community at large— our wellbeing is intertwined. And immigrants have already been paying into the system which should guarantee access.

Because of this, it is so crucial that we have a taskforce that looks at this issue in detail and suggest ways that the State of Connecticut can address the lack of access to healthcare for undocumented immigrants. This taskforce MUST include representatives from immigrant rights advocacy organizations, as well as health equity organizations. The focus should be to study healthcare access for undocumented immigrants, as well as other groups of immigrants ineligible for HUSKY or other forms of health insurance coverage in the State of Connecticut because of their immigration status. This taskforce should also analyze the cost of expanding HUSKY A, B, C, and D coverage for all immigrants regardless of status and time of residency.

Thank you for your time,  
*Constanza Segovia*  
Hartford Deportation Defense  
Greater Hartford Family Advocacy Center