

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Gabriela Aguilar, I am a fellow in Complex Family Planning from New Haven. I am a descendent of Mexican immigrants and have a deep understanding of the struggles of undocumented persons.

I stand in support of S.B. No. 956: “AN ACT PROVIDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS,” with clear language that extends eligibility to all HUSKY programs to all CT residents, regardless of immigration status.

My grandparents immigrated to the U.S. in the 1930s and 1940s to work in the agriculture industry. As they started their families and pursued their dream of a better life in the U.S. they developed a love for this country because of the social mobility that they saw was possible with access to healthcare and education in this country.

My parents were migrant farmworkers as children and both were able to lift themselves out of the cycle of poverty through the college education that they obtained through scholarships. This would not have been possible without the good health that they were able to maintain through their Medicaid enrollment as U.S. born citizens. Because of their access to healthcare and education, I was able to become the first physician in my family.

Now as a physician, I see many immigrant patients struggling with access to life saving healthcare. As a Family Planning specialist, this mostly manifests in caring for patients who need access to abortion and contraceptive care. While we have always known that abortion is lifesaving care, the pandemic has clearly demonstrated its timely and essential nature. The immigrant population already faces so many barriers and accessing care to live saving procedures should not be one of them.

I support S.B. No 956, with clear language to extend current HUSKY eligibility rules to all CT residents, regardless of immigration status, and I ask the committee to support this legislation.

Thank you for your time,

Gabriela Aguilar, MD, MPH