



Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

**Member Organizations**

**The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services**  
Ansonia, CT

**The Center for Family Justice**  
Bridgeport, CT

**Women's Center**  
Danbury, CT

**Domestic Violence Program United Services**  
Dayville, CT

**Network Against Domestic Abuse**  
Enfield, CT

**Domestic Abuse Services Greenwich YWCA**  
Greenwich, CT

**Interval House**  
Hartford, CT

**Chrysalis Domestic Violence Services**  
Meriden, CT

**New Horizons**  
Middletown, CT

**Prudence Crandall Center**  
New Britain, CT

**The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services**  
New Haven, CT

**Safe Futures**  
New London, CT

**Domestic Violence Crisis Center**  
Norwalk, CT

**Women's Support Services**  
Sharon, CT

**Domestic Violence Crisis Center**  
Stamford, CT

**Susan B. Anthony Project**  
Torrington, CT

**Safe Haven**  
Waterbury, CT

**Domestic Violence Program United Services**  
Willimantic, CT

**Testimony Supporting**

**SB 956, AA Providing Medical Assistance to Certain Individual's Regardless of Immigration Status**

**Human Services Committee  
March 11, 2021**

Good afternoon Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, Senator Berthel, Representative Case, and members of the committee. CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) is the state's leading voice for victims of domestic violence and those who serve them. Our 18 member organizations provide essential services to nearly 40,000 victims of domestic violence each year. Services provided include 24-hour crisis response, emergency shelter, safety planning, counseling, support groups and court advocacy.

**We urge your support of SB 956.**

This bill seeks to expand coverage for medical assistance under the state's Medicaid program for certain individuals regardless of their immigration status. This would provide a critical protection for many immigrant survivors of domestic violence and their children.

Currently undocumented immigrants are precluded from coverage under Medicaid and Medicare, and are also unable to purchase health insurance from Access Health CT's exchange. This means that many immigrant survivors are unable to access healthcare because their undocumented status makes them ineligible. This is true for thousands of undocumented immigrant families in Connecticut who are blocked from obtaining healthcare coverage under these state-funded programs despite contributing \$145 million in state and local taxes each year. This is shortsighted policy that results in these individuals delaying or foregoing care that may either put others at risk or result in their need to access much more costly emergency care. Providing medical assistance to undocumented immigrants means not only safeguarding their individual wellbeing, but potentially that of the community as a whole. COVID has proven this to be a stark reality.

Access to safe, affordable healthcare is one of the primary needs identified for the immigrant survivors with whom CCADV's 18 member organizations work. This population already faces so many unique challenges when seeking safety and support, the right to healthcare should not be one of them. Domestic violence survivors are at a higher risk for heart disease, traumatic brain injury, and pregnancy complications, among many other health issues. Yet many immigrant survivors, particularly those who are undocumented, are unable to access critical physical and mental health services. Access to healthcare is not only essential to preventing long-term health consequences, but it can also provide a critical connection point for survivors to safe, free and confidential domestic violence services of which they may not have otherwise been aware.

SB 956 will facilitate access to vital healthcare for immigrant survivors that will help minimize barriers to both better health outcomes and connections to domestic violence services across the state. We urge your support.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Liza Andrews  
Director of Public Policy & Communications  
[landrews@ctcadv.org](mailto:landrews@ctcadv.org)