

March 11, 2021

Dear Members of the General Assembly's Human Services Committee:

My name is Alberto Cifuentes, Jr., and I am a licensed social worker in the State of Connecticut. I live in West Haven and am a member of CT Students for a Dream, a statewide grassroots organizing team that advocates for the rights of undocumented immigrants and their families in Connecticut.

I am writing to express my unequivocal support of SB 956: An Act Providing Medical Assistance to Certain Individuals Regardless of Immigration status, but with modifications. SB 956 as currently written excludes many people in our immigrant community; for example, it leaves out low-income parents and children under HUSKY A and low-income elderly and disabled folks under HUSKY C. **I support modifying SB 956 to include ALL Connecticut residents that qualify under the full current HUSKY eligibility.**

Firstly, as a child of immigrants, I empathize with those that lack access to healthcare and other social services. Often, they lack these services not because they don't pay taxes or contribute to the state's economy but because of structural barriers, such as institutional bias and discrimination. It's time to remove these impediments to better healthcare for all people regardless of immigration status. All people have a right to receive quality healthcare for themselves and their families.

Secondly, my undocumented friends have a right to access medical resources without fear that they will be unable to pay. Medical resources should be affordable for all people regardless of status, and medical insurance is essential for making healthcare more accessible. Many immigrants work for the State of Connecticut, pay taxes, and drive the economy of the state. They should not be denied medical services because of their inability to pay.

Lastly, healthcare is a human right. Period. Having equal access to healthcare would change the lives of so many undocumented folks and help them and their families get the life-saving care and treatment they need. If our state truly cared about equity, it would ensure that all people have access to proper healthcare.

SB 956 would benefit the lives of so many immigrants regardless of status by ensuring that they have access to proper medical care and insurance. Connecticut is a state that welcomes everyone and gives people the chance to become active and successful members of society. Please vote favorably for this bill with the specified modifications. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Alberto Cifuentes, Jr., LMSW
Resident of West Haven, CT