

Testimony SB956: AN ACT PROVIDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS March 11th, 2020

Dear esteemed members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Faith Crittenden and I am a graduating fourth-year medical student, and future pediatrician. I am in support of SB956: AN ACT PROVIDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.

As a medical student, I recognize our responsibility to care for all patients, regardless of race, income, or immigration status. As someone who has family members who are undocumented I know the struggle they face with obtaining quality health care. Unfortunately, our state laws do not reflect that same commitment. While the uninsured rate in Connecticut is roughly 5.9%, an estimated 52% of undocumented immigrants in our state are uninsured and over 13,000, of these individuals are children. Undocumented immigrants are prohibited from participating in HUSKY, the state's Medicaid program for low-income residents, or from purchasing private health insurance on Access Health CT, the state marketplace established by the Affordable Care Act.

This has not only been hard on their families but also on my own. Connecticut has already begun to recognize the moral responsibility and sensibility of making sure all communities in the state have access to health care. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Connecticut has used Emergency Medicaid funds to cover COVID-19 testing and treatment for residents who didn't qualify for Medicaid based on immigration status.

As a future health care provider, I understand the devastating human consequences of restricting access to health care. As someone who has family members who are undocumented I pray for their health and safety everyday. I ask you to support this legislation that would remove immigration status from HUSKY eligibility rules and would finally allow our most vulnerable community members to access quality medical care.

Sincerely,

Faith Crittenden, MPH
M.D. Candidate May 2021