

Ubaldo Garcia
Unidad Latina en Acción
Resident of New Haven

In support of SB 956 (with modifications)

Honorable Members of the Human Services Committee:

I have lived in New Haven for twenty years, working and paying taxes. I want to tell you my story, so that you can understand why healthcare should be available to all regardless of their immigrant status or how much money they have in their pockets. Please support SB 956, and make sure that Husky is available for everyone.

A year and a half ago, I was the victim of a terrible crime. A drunk driver ran me over, mutilating my right leg and leaving me with kidney problems. Now I need medical care for the rest of my life, as well as a prosthesis that would allow me to start walking again to carry on a more normal life.

But this is extremely difficult since I do not have insurance, and the government does not give me any help to pay for my many medications and medical appointments with specialists. This is a great irony because, on one hand, the government excludes immigrants from any assistance, but on the other hand, we pay taxes that end up paying the salaries of public officials, who make these laws that are so unjust. This is not only a matter of discrimination against immigrants or on the basis of race; the problem goes much further. This is a classist and oppressive system because, in this country, our health is just a business and not a priority. This is why we demand better public policies in healthcare, so that healthcare is available to all regardless of their status or how much money they have in their pockets— it would be available to them because they are human.

When I lost my leg, the insurance payment from the drunk driver who amputated my leg was only enough to cover the emergency medical costs. I did not receive any discount. There was not even a single dollar to help me pay the bills or go through rehabilitation, and the health care system did not care that I lacked insurance and did not care to cover a prosthesis to be able to have a minimally normal life. Today, I cannot work or support myself. A prosthesis costs more than \$40,000. I cannot even pay my gas bill now, much less an adequate prosthesis so that I can reenter society.

That is why I am asking for what is just. You have the power in your hands to pass a more equitable law that puts people over profit. Thank you.