

Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. No. 956: “AN ACT PROVIDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS”
March 11th, 2021

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

My name is Natasha Harris. I am a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner working with children, adolescents, families and young adults in New Haven County.

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.

As a therapist and consultant, I have worked with children who struggle with emotional and behavioral challenges. Many have experienced trauma and the sequelae of living in poverty. For those whose parents are undocumented, there is often the additional burden of worrying about the health and wellbeing of their parents who are unable to get the health care they need. At the beginning of the pandemic, I was contacted to provide support for a boy whose young mother had died suddenly. It was unclear if the death was related to coronavirus, but it may have been given that the mother was an essential worker unable to work remotely, as many others did. This young boy was left grieving the tragic loss of his mother, but also with a father who was bereft, overwhelmed, and in need of mental health supports for himself (as well as for his child), supports that he could not readily access without health insurance. The future of Connecticut depends upon its children—children whose physical and emotional wellness depends upon the health of their caregivers. Please see your way clear to support the health of all Connecticuters.

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,
Natasha Harris, APRN