

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

My name is Eleazar Hernandez. I am a father and a resident of West Haven, CT. I am undocumented and affiliated with the Semilla Collective.

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.

I have been through very difficult situations because of being undocumented, like fear from not having health insurance and not being able to be cared for if I get sick. I was operated on a few months ago, and truthfully it is very difficult to not have health insurance. For I was trying to get the surgery and could not do it because of the costs. Sadly, without migration papers many doors are closed like being able to have a good job, where you can get insurance or even pay for health insurance. I have an axillary mass that has gotten worse over the years. I worked as a cook and in construction. I had a severe pain in the armpit and I could no longer take it. I knew that without insurance I would end up with a huge amount of medical debts, so I got in touch with Project Access. They referred me to the community clinic at the Hill Health Center and they provided me with a lower cost for my treatment. I ended up needing surgery and other exams, including a colonoscopy to look for cancer. I ended up in thousands of dollars of debt.

I lost my two jobs due to the pandemic. This has gravely affected my finances. I am behind on rent and my bills. My girlfriend is working and pays the majority of the costs, but it isn't enough. I try to get a job anywhere I can, but I don't make enough to cover survival needs. I am in pain and paying my medical bills. I owe a total of \$3,500. I am not able to cover medical costs while trying to stay afloat.

Having access to affordable healthcare would entirely change my life for the better. I wouldn't have such financial difficulties and having to stress about the debts that I have. I would be able to proactively manage my health and address the issues before they worsen.

I support SB 956 with modifications to include all the undocumented community and hope that the committee will vote favorably.

Thank you for your time,  
Eleazar Hernandez

