

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

My name is Maggie Hopkins I am currently an MSN Candidate in Nurse-Midwifery at the Yale School of Nursing, and I am an RN. I stand in support of SB956: AN ACT PROVIDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS, but with modifications. SB956 as currently written leaves out many in our immigrant community, it leaves out low-income parents and children under HUSKY A and low-income elderly and disabled folks under HUSKY C. I support modifying SB956 to include ALL CT residents that qualify under the full current HUSKY eligibility.

I have seen mothers come to the hospital to give birth who were unable to pay for out-of-pocket prenatal care suffer adverse birth outcomes that could have been 100% prevented if they were able to access prenatal and preventative care during the course of their pregnancies. Some of these adverse events were for simple and common diagnoses, but when left untreated can have severe complications. For example, gestational diabetes, which can be adequately controlled during pregnancy with proper medication, but without it can lead to dangerous complications like post-partum hemorrhage, or mothers separated from their babies due to needing to be in the NICU for hypoglycemia. In addition, I have seen the stress of brand-new mothers racing the clock to receive proper contraceptive counseling and treatment for hormonal birth control in the short hours before they are discharged from the hospital and their emergency coverage comes to an end. These undo stresses could easily be avoided if we treated everyone with the dignity they deserve and gave them access to HUSKY.

I firmly believe that healthcare is a human right, and if we say are a sanctuary state, we need to be properly equipped to handle the healthcare of the people residing in our state. This is a public health issue, and we cannot overlook that fact. Giving people access to care in non-emergent situations is the most economical route and will lower the costs of spent on emergency care. Furthermore, if undocumented immigrants are contributing to taxes, they should be able to receive the benefits of those contributions, i.e. HUSKY healthcare. It is equitable and just.

I appreciate your time in reading this testimony. I support S.B. No 956 with the modifications above, and hope the committee will make those changes.

Thank you for your time,
Maggie Hopkins, RN