

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

My name is Eui Young Kim. I am a student at Yale College.

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 an international student from South Korea, I have often had to reflect on how the legal system and changes in U.S. immigration policy impact immigrants, refugees, and students like me. This experience has largely informed my decision to work at New Haven Legal Assistance for a year after graduation and then pursue a J.D. at Yale Law School.

Because South Korea has universal healthcare, I never had to worry about medical bills there. I took for granted that I could see a doctor whenever I needed treatment. That all changed in college. When the pandemic hit and students had to move off campus, I had to stay with my sister in Massachusetts and was paranoid about getting sick. Yale’s insurance plan does not cover out of state care except for medical emergencies, and I was never quite sure what would count as an emergency. This spring, a pill got lodged in my throat and I wanted to see an ENT doctor in New York, where I currently live, but I decided not to because my insurance would not cover it. When I return to New Haven this fall, I will be uninsured because I will not be a student anymore and my job is unpaid. I am terrified of what might happen if I get sick during that time. I don’t want to have to pay thousands of dollars for a single hospital visit.

I know many people who decline to go see a doctor even when they are ill because they cannot afford the cost. Every other developed country has some form of universal healthcare except the United States. If South Korea can do it, why not the United States? Healthcare is a basic human right.

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,
Eui Young Kim
Student at Yale College