

March 10, 2021

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

My name is Karen Lapuk I am an educator from Mansfield who has been teaching for more than 30 years, 19 years in CT. I have taught in Windham, Manchester, and I am currently in the LEARN district in a magnet school in East Hartford.

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 had the privilege to work with students from all over the world, both documented and undocumented. Access to healthcare is life-changing for Connecticut’s students and their families. While I have been fortunate to work with students at schools with school-based health centers, family members of my students have often been left out of that access to health care. We put our whole community at risk and our school families in jeopardy by not having affordable access to healthcare available to all families in Connecticut. In this country, it is embarrassing that we cannot support our community on this level.

Preventative healthcare, as well as acute care, allows parents to better care for their own children. There have been times when parents have been afraid to get medical care for themselves or for their children; during COVID this is dangerous, not only for their immediate family but for their co-workers, fellow church or mosque attendees, and others who might be regularly within proximity of the family. When a parent is sick or injured and not able to get medical care, s/he is not able to work and without an income, the situation becomes even more grave. This is especially frustrating for families who are contributing their taxes to the State.

I support S.B. No 956, with clear language to extend current HUSKY eligibility rules to all Connecticut residents, regardless of immigration status, and I ask the committee to please support this legislation.

Thank you for your time,

**Karen Lapuk**