

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

My name is Grisela Luna Juarez, I am at the University of Connecticut and a New Haven resident. I am the daughter of immigrant parents who were once undocumented.

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 was born in the State of Florida where my family had been working for some time before I arrived. Like many immigrants they worked as farm workers under the sweltering sun. Long hours and little pay. With little power to speak about the mistreatment of farmworkers, my family allowed themselves to come in contact with carcinogenic pesticides and fertilizers. We believe this is why my grandfather grew a tumor that grew from his next to one of his eyes. The trips to the hospitals, the late nights worrying about if and how he would recuperate. I was angry that we couldn't fit a legal battle against those who allow harsh chemicals to be sprayed while farmworkers are present. I was grateful that my grandfather had been in the US long enough at this point that he had legal documentation. However, he was not and is still not a US citizen despite living in this country for twenty years but I cannot imagine what it would have been like for him to go through this hardship without access to healthcare. Even now with the ongoing pandemic my mind goes back to when I was a child fearing anything could happen to my parents while at work. My parents and I have had too many Covid-19 scares while working in the public, amongst people who do not care if they get Covid-19 because it's "just like a flu". Immigrant families, undocumented immigrant families work tirelessly to give their family a better life. They follow the rules and pay taxes without receiving the benefits. Access to quality and affordable healthcare is a human right. I do want to be the scared little girl anymore. As a future educator, I do not want to see the same fear in my students. 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 for our families.

Thank you for your time,
Grisela Luna Juarez