

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

My name is Amy L. Martin, from New Britain, and I am a former hospital social worker.

I stand in support of SIBI 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 worked as a hospital social worker in a CT hospital in the late nineties and early two thousands. One of my responsibilities was to help low income patients obtain "free bed funds" from the hospital to help them pay their bills. A substantial number of these patients were undocumented immigrants with no health insurance. After several years, that responsibility was taken away from me and I was ordered to stay away from the billing department. Apparently, I was too good at getting free bed funds for patients to pay their quite expensive bills. And the hospital had obviously decided to be less helpful.

During my time at the hospital, I was surprised to learn that many undocumented immigrants pay state and federal taxes. They even pay into social security, which they will never receive. (Gee, Donald Trump never mentioned that!)

The undocumented do the jobs that no one else wants to do. They are our nannies, our nurse's aides, our construction workers, our agricultural workers, our maintenance workers..They do essential jobs and yet only receive low pay in compensation.They are also a large segment of CT consumers who support many CT businesses. Why not extend Husky Health Insurance to undocumented immigrants?! It benefits them and us. If they don't get preventive care, they end up in emergency rooms, which we all pay for and by that point, it is much more expensive!

CT's undocumented immigrants are valuable members of CT. They are some of the sweetest and most hard working people I have ever met. Most had to come here to flee unbearable poverty and violence. Many lived in conditions that were created by U.S. wars and economic policies.

We humans are all connected. When one suffers, we all suffer.

We, in CT, are all connected. When a large number of undocumented residents suffer from lack of health insurance, all of CT suffers.

Keep CT healthy and strong. Build a better CT by passing S.B. No 956, with clear language to extend current HUSKY eligibility rules to all CT residents, regardless of immigration status. I ask the committee to support this legislation.

Thank you for your time,
Amy L. Martin
Social Worker