

Testimony for S.B. No.956: “AN ACT PROVIDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS”

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

My name is Laura Minor. I am a resident of Bristol and I am a former physician assistant and am retired from working in health care for over 40 years.

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 worked in a number of settings, in California and in Connecticut. In Connecticut, as a PA in an inner-city clinic, I saw many immigrants and low-income patients. Those without health insurance often waited too long for care. They came to the clinic seriously ill, often having tried home remedies first. Some wound up hospitalized due to the prolonged illness without care.

In Waterbury, I worked with people with HIV/AIDS. After giving people a positive test result, those without insurance often could not access the preventative care needed to give them healthier lives.

In West Hartford, I worked in women’s health care and saw women without health insurance show up with serious consequences of sexually transmitted diseases because of delay in accessing care. I saw unplanned pregnancies in women without money to access birth control.

In my most recent position at Wheeler Clinic, clients and patients without healthcare coverage had difficulty accessing mental health treatment, treatment for addiction, access to preventive care for chronic conditions, etc.

This state needs to ensure that all people living here have access to health care coverage. It is cruel not to provide to immigrants and low-income parents and their children and the elderly, but it creates a public health problem and an economic hardship on our hospitals when the uninsured need hospital-based care for preventable, infectious and treatable conditions.

I support S.B. No 956 with the modifications above, and hope the committee will make those changes.

Thank you for your time,

Laura Schlesinger Minor