

**Testimony in Support of S.B. 956:**  
**An Act Providing Medical Assistance to Certain Individuals Regardless of Immigration Status**  
March 11, 2020

Dear Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie, and Distinguished Members of the Human Services Committee;

My name is Julia Rosenberg. I am a pediatrician, originally from Connecticut, who has returned to my home state to practice medicine in New Haven, where I work in the community as a pediatrician.

I am writing in support of S.B. 956, An Providing Medical Assistance to Certain Individuals Regardless of Immigration Status , but with modifications. SB956 as currently written leaves out many in our immigrant community: 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.

As a pediatrician, I have a simple mission: to provide compassionate care for vulnerable children and families. However, because undocumented children are ineligible for state Medicaid, this is currently not possible for approximately 13,000 undocumented children in our state who could be eligible with passage of this bill. With S.B. 956, Connecticut has the opportunity to join six states and Washington, DC who already provide undocumented children the healthcare they need and to lead the way in ensuring all of our residents, regardless of documentation status, receive the health care they need.

Children's health suffers without insurance coverage. Compared with their uninsured peers, insured children:

- Avoid risky behaviors (like drug and alcohol use)
- Do better in school, have better school attendance, and have more successful careers
- Have better health as adults, with fewer costly and painful chronic conditions

As a pediatrician, I worry and care for the children I see, but I worry even more for those whom I do not see—those who cannot receive care because of lack of insurance eligibility. With regular healthcare, children and parents build trusting relationships with their clinicians. Parents turn to physicians to promptly identify everything from developmental delays to mental health disorders to medical problems. The relationship built from consistent, reliable care can reduce unnecessary and expensive emergency room visits, hospitalizations, and preventable illnesses.

For the many undocumented children without insurance who have already faced significant trauma, serious problems may only come to medical attention when it's too late. That results in costly, and sometimes dangerous, consequences that should have be preventable—from hospitalizations to permanent developmental disability.

Insuring all residents regardless of documentation status is an upfront investment that will ultimately result in a brighter and healthier future for Connecticut's next generations. Passage of S.B. 956 with aforementioned modifications will benefit not only Connecticut's children and families, but also the health and wellbeing of our state and its future.

Sincerely,

Julia Rosenberg MD MHS. New Haven, Connecticut