

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

My name is Molly Teague. I am a law student and a Co-Director of the Medical-Legal Partnership at HAVEN Clinic, which serves uninsured people in the New Haven area, and prior to law school conducted health policy research as a contractor for Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

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.

As a Co-Director of the Medical-Legal Partnership of the HAVEN Clinic, I see firsthand the challenges faced by uninsured individuals in my community. While our providers strive to offer high-quality care to meet the needs of our patients, there are inherent limits to what a student-run, weekly clinic can provide. We experience challenges getting patients access to specialty care, and some patients’ conditions would benefit from closer monitoring than a weekly clinic can offer. Furthermore, our clinic only accepts adult patients up to age 65, leaving significant gaps in coverage for the local uninsured population.

Beyond the fact that healthcare is a human right that should not be denied due to the ability to pay or immigration status, expanding HUSKY is economically practical. Preventative care has consistently been shown to reduce overall health spending. Access to insurance will encourage early interventions in health problems, and early treatment will reduce spending in the long term, sparing costs that would otherwise be borne by both public and private payers, including state governments.

As taxpayers funding state health programs, immigrant communities deserve an equal and fair opportunity to access the very programs we fund. Without coverage, countless families and individuals risk going into economic insecurity and debt simply for visiting a doctor and receiving costly treatment.

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 respectfully ask the committee to support this important legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

**Molly Teague**

Co-Director, Medical-Legal Partnership at HAVEN Clinic