

My name is Kat and I am writing to submit written testimony and support for S.B. 956. This bill would provide access to low-income and individuals living on the poverty line, who otherwise have limited to no healthcare coverage. What's more is that it would provide this regardless of immigration status.

While there might be personal opinion and bias which ventures to argue that non-U.S. citizens should not have access to government-funded healthcare, therein reflects a rather dangerous sense of exclusivity. Because our national opinion- at least under that of more conservative and centrist rule- is that only those deserving should receive support from the government while millions are born, contribute and pay taxes into our economy at a state and federal level at a grossly larger rate than the wages which they receive. Which, if we're going to be consistent and exclude every person that doesn't fit the description from getting support and care when it is needed, fine. But then we cannot accept taxes or labor or any loyalty from that citizen. It isn't just a matter of morals but a business understanding. We have come to think we can manage our own like cattle and they will remain loyal so long as corporations feed them a pittance every two weeks. This is not the case. And while it's further evident that every state in this nation has taken clear advantage of immigrant and refugee communities to improve their economy and increase the wealth of cities and metropolises, it should be noted that this also isn't a sustainable business model. A professor once told me that you take care of your guests/clients/customers when you take care of your staff. If you don't take care of your staff, they have no reason to care for the business you are managing nor the people who wish to consume.

Now, of course, politicians aren't in the position to run businesses but your business is people. If you do not take care of your constituents, it will always reflect onto you and eventually catch up. And perhaps healthcare is the best example of this, especially in a pandemic. If we do not provide healthcare coverage to those who need it most- documented, TCP, green card, undocumented, refugee, etc. they are in danger of getting sick, developing infections from injuries, getting covid and in turn contribute to spread and hot spots. And as most reports and articles reflect, a portion of deaths from this pandemic come from diseases and infections that could not be treated because hospitals were strained or at capacity. To be exclusive in one capacity while reaping the benefits of all constituents is not just morally unethical, it's an expensive and unsustainable business plan. And on a civic level, if we are truly managing our constituents and their rights, we must respect that ancestrally speaking 95 percent of us were not native to these lands. This inherited privilege and one that continues to live on stolen land is one we need to heed with more respect than we consider. To serve the working class and public is a privilege as they serve our communities and are the backbone of this nation.