

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

My name is David Vallejo, I am a student at the University of Connecticut and I am from New Haven, Connecticut.

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.

I have lived in New Haven for all twenty years of my life and both of my parents for even longer. Both my mother and father have lived in Connecticut for as long as they remember. My mother came here when she was 18 and this April she turns 55. That’s around 37 years that my mother has been here and a few years less for my father. My father for as far as I know always worked two jobs, when I started waking up early for high school, he would leave for work at his first job at 5:30 in the morning and he would not come back from his second job until 12 am. He did all this to support our family. Even when my parents separated my dad continued to work these two jobs until recently. My mother works at various places cleaning up whatever is asked for her to clean. Some people may say stuff like this can be simple, but when you get injured, your injury can interfere with your ability to properly do your tasks. This is something I have seen firsthand with my mother over the past years. Growing up I always thought that only my parents and other close family members were the only ones to go through this hesitation to go to the doctors just because of medical costs. It wasn’t until I met more people with similar backgrounds as mine at the University of Connecticut when I began getting involved with organizations within the Puerto Rican Latin American Cultural Center, and talked to other brothers from my fraternity, Lambda Theta Phi Latin Fraternity, Incorporated, where I started to see that this issue was a very common one.

My father currently does not have health insurance, and this worries me because he had contracted Covid-19 a few months ago and the long-term damage that comes with Covid is definitely one that brings concern. On my mother’s side, she had gone years without any health insurance and this has led to her suffering from severe nerve damage that could have been gotten fixed almost 2 years ago had she been covered by HUSKY. However, because she was not able to, she now suffers from frequent nerve pain on her wrist that is not completely reversible. My mother is only turning 55 and to think she will have to suffer from pain in her arm for the rest of her life hurts me. This could have been completely preventable had she been under HUSKY.

This bill would help my family and so many others within my community in so many ways. From not only getting treatment if they are sick or get hurt but also preventing long-term damage like what has happened to my mother and the nerve damage in her arm. Furthermore, this would remove a lot of stress from everyone’s lives as there is less to worry about when someone gets sick or injured since they would be able to actually see a doctor without worrying about large medical costs.

I support this bill with clear language that extends the current HUSKY eligibility rules to all Connecticut residents, regardless of anyone’s immigration status. I appreciate the committee for hearing everyone’s testimony and I urge the committee to support the legislation.

Thank you for your time,  
David Vallejo