

Date: 03/10/2021

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

My name is Cassandra Wilke, I am a resident from Hartford. I am a family specialist at the organization Family Life Education.

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.

As a family specialist from Family Life Education, I work with low income families from all different cultures and backgrounds. In the time I have been working with these families the lack of health care for our undocumented families has been greatly exacerbated by the current pandemic.

Many of these families had already had to make a choice between paying medical care and putting food on the table. Now with the added fear and concerns this choice is made even more difficult. What if what seems to be a common cold or flu is so much more? Is it not the wise choice to get checked out in case? What if you were unable to afford a trip to a doctor that could save /yours or a family member's life? Many of the families I work with have to answer these questions because of their inability to have healthcare.

There is a family that we work with who has an older child who is not eligible for insurance because he was not born in this country. She also has two younger children who were born in the U.S. and because of that fact alone they have health insurance when their brother does not. As a parent of three, I cannot begin to think of what I would be going through if the wrong child were to become severely ill. Having two of my children receiving well visits to ensure they grow up as healthy as possible, and one child I need to struggle to come up with the money for an immunization that is not only required to attend school but is a necessity for him to grow up and live a healthy life.

This bill could change things for so many families that are being denied what we consider a basic right for ourselves and our families.

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

Thank you for your time,

Cassandra Wilke