

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

My name is Byron Xavier Arevalo, I am a student from Danbury. I am undocumented.

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.

This is my second time in a Public Hearing. A little about me; I belong to the class of 2020, with a University Degree, (major) Certification: Bachelor of Science (BS) on Biochemistry, American Chemical Society (ACS) Approved and a Certification (minor) in Mathematics. I'm currently a member of the American Chemical Society. Also, I have a Certification from the Red Cross; CPR/AED for Professional Rescuer, First Aid, and Lifeguarding. Thus, while completing my journey at WCSU I was able to perform research on finding synthetic methods to allow new bonds upon sulfur-containing heterocycles. Sulfur is the money making! Since is one of the elements most used in medical drugs. Also, I have done research on ChemiaCafea. In which I analyzed how processing and roasting conditions affected the chemical composition of coffee.

Today I'm doing my Master in Rutgers University on Biomedical Science with a concentration in Oral Biology. I'm doing a new research with Dr. Matthew Neiditch in the Lab of The Public Health Research Institute Center at Newark NJ, and I'm in the lab every day (no weekends & holidays). A little about my research. We work on *Bacillus subtilis* (*B. subtilis*), which is naturally competent. That is, it can take up DNA from the environment, recombine it into its chromosome, and potentially acquire new traits. Mechanistically, how DNA crosses the cellular membrane to get into the cell is unknown! Hence a major project for us is to determine the cryo-EM structure of *B. subtilis* ComEC, which is the membrane protein central for importing DNA from the environment into the cytoplasm of *B. subtilis*.

The reason why I'm talking about my personal life is because I been in school all my life and I never had a gap year. So, every year I had to pay a private health insurance. This year I had to pay about 3,000\$. Only my Master cost is about 50,000\$. Thus, I have huge loans. Of course not with the State neither a bank but a loan with my family. Passing this bill will changed my life complete because I will be saving 3,000\$ yearly. I'm force to have a Health Insurance in order to be in school. Thus I been paying a Health Insurance yearly. Note that I been six years in a university so you can imagine how much I been paying for Health Insurance. I still have four more year of school on my way since I will be going to a Dental School, most likely a school in CT. Dental School is already expensive. Not having to worry about paying a private Health Insurance will remove huge stress and loan amount in my life. Health Insurance is a very important factor for a student. CT has passed bill like the Driving Only Bill (I was present in this public hearing). This was huge prove that how passing bills helps our economy in CT. DMV has been more busy that ever. Providing job and big amount of money for the state of CT.

This is not only a money issue. Thus, this is a health issue. Like I said I been working in; The Public Health Research Institute Center at Newark NJ. This place had taught me how important is to have Health Insurance. I'm exposed to COVID-19 every day since Scientifics are doing research in our department. I have to get tested weakly for COVID. I visited my parent often in CT they don't have any Health Insurance and most undocumented people in CT don't have it. Today you have the opportunity to change my future. To keep our lives safe. Being a science student and future health provider have showed me that there will be always diseases, pandemics, and toxics exposure. Note that I'm

undocumented and I will be undocumented until politics change. Thus, please take action. Let's make a difference in states. Let's show that CT cares about health. I believe if action is taken today there will be a big improvement of health in our country. Note that the COVID pandemic shows how crucial it is to have a Health Insurance. Let's give numbers and examples, most American citizens or residents are getting tested for COVID. Undocumented people are not an example my mom. Plus, most Americans and residents had financial help during the pandemic. Thus, they are being provided with a check and a health insurance. Undocumented are not an example me. I have not received any help until today. This is not a complaint but I just think that is not fair. Even though me and my family have been filing taxes yearly. We get money removed from our checks but we never get any help.

Did you know that Lyme disease cases are shown yearly in CT. Thus, since it is a disease originated from a town here in CT, Old Lyme town. The reason why I'm talking about this is because the COVID pandemic will eventually be gone since vaccines are being delivered. But there will always be disease, infections, accidents, etc. I will get a vaccine for COVID on March 26. The first question that I was asked for getting my vaccine was; do you have a health insurance. In my family we are seven members. I'm the only one with Health Insurance. My brother also goes to school. He goes to WCSU. He is a future professor. He will be teaching Mathematics. He is in his fourth year now. I don't understand why Health Insurance is not being provided for everyone. My dad drives a truck, he is a country man. Thus working moving hay. He has a skin infection due to the hay. He cannot go to a doctor because we are paying for schools. He has no Health Insurance. My sister works as a nail spa helping women to look wonderful. By the way she was born with harelip. She cannot even afford a treatment. My mom owns a business in Danbury CT. Customers walk every day to the store. She will be getting her endoscopy; a mouth and anus endoscopy. This will be happening this month she will be paying about 2,000\$. Yet she has no Health Insurance. Yet we all file taxes, work helping people, give to the economy to the US, do scientific research, wake up early and work for improving our life and the community life. A tremendous bill (1.9T relief) has passed that will provide economic help for residents and American citizens. Yet we undocumented have not helped.

I have been ten years in the US to this moment I never had any governmental help. However, I have zero loans with the state or country. Allow me to thank you for listening to us, undocumented. Thank you for introducing the bill. I truly believe this bill will pass because I'm sure you will not let me alone in this moment. Thank you and God bless America.