

My name is Mercy Yalartai, I am a resident from Hartford. I stand in support of expanding HUSKY to all state residents regardless of immigration status. I am in support of SB956: AN ACT PROVIDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. This bill would help to give healthcare access to the many people that I care about and the communities that I serve. It is our duty to ensure that ALL CT residents have access to necessary care that has been intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic. Access to healthcare is a human right and no person should be denied or face obstacles in obtaining the healthcare they need due to the ability to pay or immigration status.

In Connecticut, undocumented immigrants are discriminated against in accessing health coverage. They are prohibited from buying into AccessHealth CT and are ineligible for Medicaid, Medicare, and other health coverage programs. Immigrant families cannot seek the proper health care needed. With 120,000 estimated undocumented immigrants in CT, this is a massive public health concern.

The COVID-19 public health crisis is magnifying the daily and systemic inequities that undocumented communities face. Lack of access to healthcare means that chronic health issues that could be treated develop into more serious conditions. Putting our immigrant community at risk for worse health outcomes if they become infected with COVID-19.

Extending HUSKY to all regardless of status will address the uninsured rate in Connecticut, allow your constituents to be able to receive the proper care and treatment they deserve, and ensure families and individuals are not at risk of economic insecurity as a result of seeking medical care.

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 ask the committee to support this legislation.

Thank you for your time,
Mercy Yalartai