

TESTIMONY

Human Services Committee

Senate Bill 956:

An Act Providing Medical Assistance to Certain Individuals Regardless of Immigration Status
March 11, 2021

On behalf Yale New Haven Children's Hospital and the Yale Department of Pediatrics, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 956, An Act Providing Medical Assistance to Certain Individuals regardless of Immigration Status.

Yale New Haven Children's Hospital, a full-service acute care hospital for children, opened in 1993 and currently includes 212 licensed beds in New Haven and Bridgeport. As part of the Yale New Haven Health System, the Yale New Haven Children's Hospital provides medical and psychiatric care across the continuum for children and families without regard to their ability to pay for the care they receive. More than half of the children cared for at YNHCH are insured by Medicaid, which reimburses the Hospital 47 cents on a dollar of cost. Last year, Yale New Haven Hospital, which includes Yale New Haven Children's Hospital, provided nearly \$200 million in free and uncompensated care. Our pediatric specialty centers, care for children who come to us from across the state of CT, in over 35 sub-specialties, and are located in Greenwich, New Haven, Norwalk, Old Saybrook, and Trumbull.

SB 956 seeks to extend Medicaid eligibility to include low-income parents and children under HUSKY A, and low-income elderly and disabled adults under HUSKY C, regardless of immigration status. While we care for all children who enter our doors regardless of their insurance status, many children enter our care far too late because of their lack of health care insurance. Data show that children who have access to continuous health insurance have better health outcomes; they are more likely to receive the primary and specialist care they need, resulting in fewer days of missed school, and less emergency department visits. Many states have recognized this, and have successfully provided health insurance to all children in their state, regardless of documentation status, including our neighbors Massachusetts and New York, 4 other states, as well as the District of Columbia.

The mission of Yale New Haven Children's Hospital is to be: *committed to innovation and excellence in patient care, teaching, research and service to our communities*. In order to provide this care and service to our communities, we support initiatives that ensure that all children and their families are eligible for health insurance that helps them to access comprehensive medical care. We must invest in our children and their families now so they can thrive in the future.

We urge your support of SB 956 and thank you for your consideration of our testimony.