

Dear Members of Insurance and Real Estate of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Anthony Barroso. I am a resident of New Haven, Connecticut. I am a member of the Semilla Collective and an organizer for immigrant rights. I support S.B. 842: An Act Concerning Health Insurance and Health Care In Connecticut.

S.B. 842 will make health care equitable, dependable, and affordable by creating new public options for health insurance in our state. **There is an ongoing health care emergency that demands urgent action.** It's critical that we expand health care coverage and make dependable health care more affordable in the face of a deadly pandemic, especially with so many workers losing their jobs and health coverage.

This bill is important to me because affordable healthcare is a human right. I am undocumented and I've experienced first hand lack of access to affordable healthcare due to my immigrant status. This led me to live anxiously about getting hurt or becoming sick. One visit to the hospital left me in \$8,000 of debt. The only way I am able to have insurance now is because I obtained DACA and was able to join my husband's work provided health plan. This is not the case for many of the undocumented residents in CT that don't have access to affordable healthcare.

Throughout my time organizing with the Semilla collective to support mutual aid efforts during the pandemic in New Haven, I've met and spoken to many undocumented families and individuals about the challenges they are facing. Many are unemployed due to the pandemic and cannot afford their rent, bills or have access to affordable healthcare due to their legal status, that is not fair especially when undocumented immigrants contribute roughly 145 million dollars in state and local taxes every year. This bill gives the 64,00 uninsured undocumented residents in CT the ability to seek preventive care and avoid developing chronic illness. We cannot leave anyone behind in the fight for high quality, affordable and equitable health care. SB 842 will ensure everyone has access to affordable care.

Thank you,

Anthony Barroso