

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

I am from New Haven, Connecticut and I am a member of the Semilla Collective. 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.

Not having health insurance has personally affected me and my family. My husband is an undocumented immigrant and he doesn't have access to healthcare. While I do have access, my healthcare plan is very basic and does not cover as much as we need or want. I cannot help my husband because he cannot be on my plan. My husband completely avoids going to the doctor, the hospital, or getting any sort of medical care. It is unjust that my husband cannot access his own care simply because he is an undocumented immigrant.

For myself, my plan is so basic that I also avoid going to the doctor because you never know what they are going to charge you with. My insurance covers so little, it is never clear what will be covered and we can't risk getting stuck with any extra bills. The same goes for our children, we go to the doctor with them only as a last resort after we try home remedies. Even though the doctors are supposed to help, seeking medical attention feels like a risk because we are never certain what will be covered.

When there's a medical emergency, it affects us financially. Recently, my husband was in a car accident. He was driving and someone hit him. He hit his head and ended up being taken to the hospital by an ambulance. Once at the hospital, they did a bunch of tests. The costs of the ambulance and the tests came out to a lot of money. We have no idea how we are going to pay these huge bills. Since the pandemic started, my husband is out of work, and I do not have a stable job either. With food, light bills, gas bills, and the kids doing school remotely from home, we are overwhelmed. We are not getting the help we need. I applied for unemployment and other emergency financial assistance, but never received anything. We barely have the money to cover our regular expenses, we do not have the money to cover these healthcare bills. We are struggling and the state's unjust and inadequate healthcare system is making our struggles worse.

On top of everything. Being undocumented is extremely hard as we never know if my husband will be picked up by ICE. We are afraid, therefore we will submit this anonymously. Our friends at the Semilla Collective have our contact number in case members of the committee need to get a hold of us.

Our state needs to expand Medicaid so that we have more and better options. I urge the Committee and Connecticut lawmakers to support S.B. 842 so that people, no matter their immigration status, are able to get the dependable, affordable care they need.

Thank you for your time,

C. O.  
Semilla Collective Member