



Connecticut Students for a Dream

Empower. Educate. Advocate.

www.CT4aDream.org

Testimony to the Human Services Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly

March 25th, 2021

Testimony Regarding SB 1056: An Act Expanding Access to Medical Services

Dear Members and Honorable Chairs of the Human Services of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Katia Daley, I am the Healthcare Campaign Organizer of CT Students for a Dream, C4D is a statewide, youth-led network that fights for the rights of undocumented immigrant youth and their families. And our work is done through community organizing, leadership development, and advocacy. Our membership is composed by undocument and mixed status families across the state.

Our organization is a member of the Medicaid Strategy Group, a coalition of Connecticut Medicaid advocates. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of S.B. No. 1056 “An Act Expanding Access to Medical Services.”

We testify today because our immigrant communities are living under difficult and challenging times in Connecticut and in the rest of the country. To us, living unafraid means our immigrant communities have access to safe, accessible, and affordable healthcare, health insurance, and health coverage, that does not discriminate on the basis of status. SB 1056 will expand the accessibility to affordable healthcare to more of our community by increasing the income levels of HUSKY programs A, C & D.

COVID-19 has put forward the daily and systemic inequities that low-income communities, primarily immigrants and communities of color, face. During a pandemic and public health crisis, it is essential that we work to ensure that all of our state's residents have access to healthcare. During this pandemic, we have seen how we are all interconnected. When one of us can't access healthcare or basic necessities, our whole community is at risk. The only way we are going to overcome the current public health crisis is if we come together to ensure the most vulnerable in our community have the most basic necessities, including the undocumented community. During a pandemic that has already taken the lives of more than 500,000 nationwide, Connecticut has the responsibility to ensure all its residents have health coverage.

C4D is particularly concerned with this bill as it will give our mixed status families, and if SB 956 is also passed our undocumented community, higher accessibility to the HUSKY programs to be able to seek the care they need before it is too late. Time and time again we see our community members unable to afford preventative and specialized healthcare, that when it comes to a point that they can not delay their check-ups/injuries any longer, they turn to the emergency room where the cost is higher. This cycle of fear and uncertainty around our health needs has to stop. And now more than ever it is important to create access to healthcare to our community, which is vulnerable to this pandemic.

We strongly support this effort to ensure more CT residents have health coverage they can afford to use. And we strongly encourage the committee to pass SB1056 to expand the HUSKY program to more of our community, and additionally to pass SB 956 which will expand HUSKY coverage to immigrants regardless of status.

Thank you, and we hope this committee listens to the countless individuals, families, groups, and organizations advocating for this bill.

On behalf of the C4D community,

Katia Daley

CT Students for a Dream

www.ct4adream.org