

Testimony Supporting S.B. 1056 An Act Expanding Access to Medical Services
Human Services Committee
Testimony of Monica Dawkins
March 25,2021

Dear Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and esteemed members of the Human Services Committee.

My name is Monica Dawkins, resident of New Britain and a COACH counselor working with The Ministerial Health Fellowship Advocacy Coalition.

My organization is a member of the Medicaid Strategy Group, a coalition of Connecticut Medicaid advocates.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in strong support of S.B. 1056.

HUSKY is absolutely vital to many residents in the Greater New Britain area as well as those in surrounding towns in Connecticut.

As a COACH Counselor responding to local residents impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, I have learned that many persons have lost their health care benefits. Quite honestly, despite subsidies and cost sharing through Access Health CT many folks cannot afford to pay these premiums due to job losses. They are rather, too focused on meeting other basic needs such as feeding their families, paying rent and trying to manage utilities.

In my own personal family experience, I know the value of having Medicaid available and accessible. I had a family member that needed to have emergency brain surgery, there was no time to debate about the need of the surgery, it was a life or death issue. Having the opportunity to have Medicaid eased the anxiety for our family to get the care that our family member needed.

Many people who have been able to remain employed through the pandemic and due to their determination to a dedicated work ethic, they are rarely rewarded financially. However, when they do have opportunity for advancement that results in an increase of pay, many lose healthcare coverage based upon the pay increase. This sets a tone for many to remain at an income level below the poverty level.

We strongly support this effort to ensure more Connecticut residents have health insurance that is affordable.

Thank you for your time,

Monica Dawkins
COVID-19 Crisis Counselor
Ministerial Health Fellowship
Advocacy Coalition