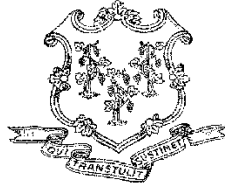


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March 25, 2021

Good Morning Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and members of the Human Services Committee. I would like to express my support for SB 1056, AN ACT EXPANDING ACCESS TO MEDICAL ASSISTANCE. This bill would increase the number of Connecticut residents with health insurance by increasing the Medicaid eligibility income limit to 200% of the federal poverty level.

People with incomes just above the Medicaid threshold are disproportionately likely to be uninsured. According to the Connecticut Health Foundation,<sup>1</sup> individuals with incomes between 100% and 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) made up 13% of Connecticut's population, but 26% of the state's uninsured residents. This increases the likelihood of poor health outcomes as well as unaffordable medical debt for this population.

In addition, SB 1056 would help to prevent a benefits cliff<sup>2</sup> that may be created by the scheduled minimum wage increase. It would be cruel to allow a drastic increase in health

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cthealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/CT-Health-Closing-the-Affordability-Gap.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://ctvoices.org/publication/impact-of-connecticuts-minimum-wage-increase-on-access-to-benefits-for-working-families-3/>

insurance costs to devour all of the benefits from the increasing minimum wage. I also believe that we should create a gradual decrease in benefits for those whose income rises above the allowable limits for benefits. Voices for Children has a report with recommendations on one option to create a ramp rather than a cliff.<sup>3</sup> This is another issue that should be addressed.

Thank you for hearing this vitally important bill.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://ctvoices.org/publication/impact-of-connecticuts-minimum-wage-increase-on-access-to-benefits-for-working-families-3/>