



June 24, 2020

By E-mail

Senator Martin Looney, President Pro Tempore
Senator Bob Duff, Majority Leader
Connecticut General Assembly
State Capitol
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Re: Senate Democrats Juneteenth Agenda for Special Session

Dear Senators Looney & Duff:

We write on behalf of the Center for Children's Advocacy, the largest children's legal rights organization in New England, and on behalf of our Medical-Legal Partnership, to thank you for putting forth the comprehensive Juneteenth Agenda for the upcoming Special Session of the Connecticut General Assembly. We wholeheartedly support the broad-based agenda and its commitment to reducing racial inequities in the cornerstone systems that continue to perpetuate systemic racism and disproportionate treatment, interventions and outcomes for Connecticut's residents of color. In particular, the agenda's Health Care Reform and COVID-19 platform is broad and impactful – and seeks to reduce the chronic and long-standing health disparities that have become so prevalent and exposed during the COVID-19 crisis.

Despite the broad health agenda proposed by your caucus, we believe there is one glaring omission to the list – that of expanding Medicaid and HUSKY insurance coverage to undocumented children and families who are *the most disproportionately affected, at-risk members of this already vulnerable patient population*.

Our office has reached out to the Governor several times since the COVID-19 pandemic began, asking Governor Lamont to expand Medicaid and HUSKY coverage to undocumented children, youth and families by using the emergency powers he has utilized multiple times commencing in March 2020. We have repeatedly asked the Governor to continue the progress the General Assembly made last year in introducing and advancing [S.B. 1053, An Act Expanding Medicaid and HUSKY B Coverage for Children](#), which was voted out of the Human Services Committee but then expired on the Senate floor due to an exorbitant fiscal note produced by the Office of Fiscal Analysis.¹

¹ The details of the OFA analysis may be found [here](#). In contrast, the [Center for Children's Advocacy's analysis](#) presented at the Human Services Committee hearing indicated that a fiscal note of \$4million in year one of

June 24, 2020

Page 2

While the state Department of Social Services and the Governor have issued an [emergency order](#) providing limited Medicaid reimbursement coverage to undocumented individuals for COVID-19 related testing and emergency treatment, this laudable first step is woefully inadequate to address the disparate care and access that the over 17,000 undocumented children and youth, as well as their families, face when confronting access to healthcare. In addition, the United States Supreme Court's ruling in the [recent DACA case](#) (*Department of Homeland Security v. Regents of the University of California*) adds all the more imperative to expand coverage to approximately 10,000 young adults living in Connecticut who are, for the time being, free from the imminent specter of deportation at the hands of the Department of Homeland Security. Most telling has been the overwhelming number of medical professionals who have continued to request this critical expansion of healthcare access. Included with this letter is the request by 245 physicians and other front-line medical clinicians imploring the Governor to expand Medicaid and HUSKY coverage to undocumented children and families – powerful indicator of the clinical need and moral imperative that surrounds this initiative.

We believe that the expansion of Medicaid and HUSKY coverage to undocumented children, youth and families fits squarely within the Senate Democrats Health Care Reform & COVID-19 platform, specifically in that it addresses overall health equity issues and addresses the disproportionate cases and deaths of “Minority Populations” due to COVID-19. The most difficult hurdle for this population is gaining the confidence that it is safe and viable to seek healthcare during the pandemic. Our hope is that the Senate, the General Assembly and the Governor will incorporate this important measure into its forward looking and progressive agenda.

Thank you in advance for your consideration in this matter. We look forward to working with you in the upcoming months to expand healthcare options and address the inequities that continue to permeate our state sponsored healthcare systems.

Sincerely yours,

/S/ Jay E. Sicklick

Jay Sicklick, Deputy Director
Director – Medical-Legal Partnership

Patricia Marealle, Staff Attorney
Children's Immigrant Justice Project

expansion and \$13 million in year two was more realistic and indicative of the gradual nature of enrollment that other states that have expanded Medicaid to include undocumented individuals had seen.



June 24, 2020

Page 3

CC: Governor Ned Lamont
Paul Mounds, Chief of Staff
Josh Geballe, Chief Operating Office
Rep. Joe Aresimowicz, Speaker of the House
Rep. Matt Ritter, Majority Leader
Rep. Bob Godfrey, Deputy Speaker Pro-Tempore
Sen. Marilyn Moore, Co-Chair Human Services Comm.
Rep. Catherine Abercrombie, Co-Chair Human Services Comm.
Rep. Christopher Rosario, Chair Conn. Black & Puerto Rican Caucus
Rep. Brandon McGee, Vice-Chair Conn. Black & Puerto Rican Caucus