

Statement in **SUPPORT** of **H.B. 6439** *An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June Thirtieth 2023 and... Appropriations: Human Services*

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

March 3, 2021

This statement represents my own personal views.

Amy Ewing, Stamford, CT

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Hartley, Representative Dathan and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee,

I am the co-chair of Stamford Interfaith Refugee Settlement, a group of volunteers which welcomes and resettles a refugee family by providing advocacy and support in Stamford as they work toward self-sufficiency to become productive members of our community.

Refugee families come with authorizations to work, but finding employment with benefits is difficult. Even a very-educated, experienced government employee with good English had to start with part-time minimum-wage jobs – as many as three at a time. HUSKY is crucial to provide medical care for the wage earner(s) and their family. Our most recent client just got a minimum-wage job with benefits; but even while working a second job – for a total of 60 hours a week -- he will not be able to afford the health insurance offered by his employer. We are therefore hopeful that HUSKY can continue to help him, as he continues to work hard to support and take care of this family and their medical insurance needs.

I therefore strongly urge you to amend this budget to do the following, in particular:

- Increase HUSKY A and D eligibility limits to 201% FPL so that lower-income adults can access quality, affordable health care
- Create access to HUSKY programs for all income-eligible immigrants
- Restore cost of living increases for Connecticut's lowest income residents

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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