



Needham Area Immigration Justice Task Force

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Testimony submitted to
Joint Committee on Health Care Financing
In support of An Act to Ensure Equitable Health Coverage for Children (H.1403/S.855)
Hearing July 15, 2025

Submitted by the Needham Area Immigration Justice Task Force, Cheryl Aglio-Girelli and Valerie Kistler, Co-Chairs; Karen Price, Legislative Liaison

The mission of the Needham Area Immigration Justice Task Force is to encourage dialogue and raise awareness within Needham and the region regarding immigration as a necessary bedrock of a prosperous and growing United States of America. We take action to welcome immigrants, change unjust policies, and ensure fair working conditions and security for families.

We are writing in support of An Act to Ensure Equitable Health Coverage for Children (H.1403/S.855). This bill would significantly impact the well-being of immigrants and their families by expanding full MassHealth coverage to all young people under age 21 who are otherwise eligible, **regardless of immigration status**.

Approximately 30,000 children and young adults in Massachusetts cannot access crucial health care only because of their immigration status. As our Task Force supports immigrant families in need, we see firsthand the difficulties immigrants have paying for healthcare—often delaying or ignoring treatment.

Medicaid coverage in childhood has been shown to improve lifelong health, success in school and earning potential.¹

As of April 2025, 14 states plus D.C. provide comprehensive state-funded coverage to children regardless of immigration status. These states include California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and D.C.²

We encourage the Joint Committee to support Massachusetts joining this growing list.

¹Wagnerman K, Chester A, Alker J. "Medicaid Is A Smart Investment in Children," Georgetown University Health Policy Institute Center for Children and Families, May, 2017, <https://ccf.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/MedicaidSmartInvestment.pdf>, accessed July 10, 2025.

²KFF. "Key Facts on Health Coverage of Immigrants," Jan 15, 2025. <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/fact-sheet/key-facts-on-health-coverage-of-immigrants/>, accessed Jul 10, 2025.