



2026  
SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
USA GAMES

April 16, 2024

Chairperson Hassan and Members of the House Economic Development Finance and Policy Committee:

On behalf of the Special Olympics athletes and the Local Organizing Committee for the 2026 Special Olympics USA Games, I am writing to express our sincere gratitude for your inclusion of \$1 million in the omnibus bill to support the inclusion initiatives of the 2026 Games. We recognize the challenging budgetary environment and appreciate your commitment to the Special Olympics mission of improving the lives of people with Intellectual Disability (ID) both ON – and OFF – the field.

While the allocated amount falls short of the \$4 million requested, the critical funding you are including this year will enable us to advance planning associated with the many initiatives that we presented. Specifically, we will be able to focus on:

- Addressing the challenges people with ID have with access to health services and disparity in health outcomes. Our work will focus on favorably impacting health and wellness in the ID community.
- Addressing underemployment and unemployment in the ID population. With only 18.5% of people with ID employed to the level of their ABILITY, our efforts will focus on driving the inclusivity of sport into the workforce.

Your support for our funding represents a crucial step in achieving our goals of leaving a legacy of inclusion in Minnesota. While we will celebrate sport on display June 20-26, 2026, the monies represent an investment in a future where everyone can contribute to Minnesota's economic growth regardless of their abilities – and it will drive significant economic impact for years to come.

We are committed to maximizing the effectiveness of these resources and will keep you informed of our progress. We look forward to continuing to work with you to secure the remaining funding to maximize impact from the platform surrounding the 2026 Special Olympics USA Games.

Thank you again for your support.

Warm regards,

Christine Sovereign  
President and CEO, 2026 Special Olympics USA Games