



Testimony on House Bill 2599 before the House Transportation Committee

By

John Lair, President and CEO of Special Olympics Kansas, Inc.

March 8th, 2018

Senator Peterson and members of the Kansas Senate:

On behalf of our 4,977 Special Olympics athletes in Kansas, we thank you for the opportunity to share testimony for the Special Olympics Kansas license plate. Special Olympics Kansas' drive is to build communities of inclusion. We stretch into each of the 105 counties in Kansas by having 107 Local Programs. Each year, over 71 competitions are held in one of our 20 year round sports. From basketball to bowling, bocce to skiing, we are moving our athletes from the sidelines to the playing fields.

But Special Olympics Kansas is more than just sports. We are also focusing on the health, wellness, and leadership skills of our athletes. In 2017, we provided free dental screenings, vision testing and eyewear, hearing tests and overall health assessments. We also believe in our athletes leading and driving our mission. Many are Global Ambassadors; serving on various event steering committees, Executive Councils, and our Board of Directors.

This would not be possible without the tremendous support Special Olympics Kansas receives from fellow Kansans. Over 23,500 volunteers give their time. Over 10,000 donors make a gift to show their support. Over 1,700 Kansas Law Enforcement officers participate in our annual Law Enforcement Torch Run fundraising and awareness activities. These numbers don't include parents, guardians, family members, or our fans in the stands!

With the passage of a Special Olympics Kansas license plate, each Kansan will be able to show their support of our athletes in their hometowns. While we are proud of what we accomplish on a statewide level, Special Olympics Kansas knows it is the local connections that help us achieve our mission...building communities of inclusion!

Thank You for your time and consideration.

Special Olympics Kansas

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Directors: Glen Grunwald (Chairperson), Taylor Miller, Josh Alters, Kate Barthuly, John Cassidy, Dan Dolan, Allan Henderson, Rick Jones, Tim Klein, Elena Lincoln, Tonia Lee, Amy Loder, Shannon Murphy (LETR), Cory Powell, and Travis Salmon.

Special Olympics Kansas Inc. is a registered 501(c)(3) charitable organization in the State of Kansas. Fed Tax ID: 48-0890981
Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities