

Date of Hearing: June 19, 2019

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, TOURISM, AND
INTERNET MEDIA

Kansen Chu, Chair

AJR 14 (Lackey) – As Amended June 10, 2019

SUBJECT: Special Olympics.

SUMMARY: This resolution would call for continued support and recognition of the many benefits provided by Special Olympics.

Specifically, **this resolution makes the following findings and declarations:**

- 1) In the 1950s and 1960s, Eunice Kennedy Shriver was motivated by her personal family experience to improve the lives of persons with intellectual and physical disabilities and to take actions that led to the creation of the Special Olympics.
- 2) The mission of Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills, and friendships with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community.
- 3) The opportunities provided by Special Olympics allow people with intellectual disabilities to discover new strengths, abilities, skills, and successes, instilling the confidence they need to succeed in life.
- 4) Today, the Special Olympics is the world's largest sports organization for children and adults with intellectual and physical disabilities, providing year-round training and competitions to 5,000,000 athletes and Unified Sports partners in 172 countries.
- 5) In addition to sports, Special Olympics is the world's largest public health organization for people with intellectual disabilities and offers a wide range of free health exams and care.
- 6) Special Olympics is improving the health of people with intellectual disabilities by providing tools and information to make healthy choices and knowledge on how to prevent illness.
- 7) Special Olympics has provided over 900,000 screenings to date to identify unmet health needs before they become emergencies.
- 8) Furthermore, Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools promote social inclusion by bringing together young people with and without intellectual disabilities through sports, classroom, and community events.
- 9) Students with intellectual disabilities are less likely to spend time in a regular education environment than students with any other type of disability.

- 10) By having students with and without intellectual disabilities sharing classrooms, bullying and isolation challenges that can occur in school environments are reduced.
- 11) Special Olympics Northern California and Special Olympics Southern California each host annual Summer Games that attract more than 1,870 athletes from across the state.
- 12) The Summer Games features track and field, basketball, bocce, flag football, swimming, and tennis.

FISCAL EFFECT: None. This resolution has been keyed nonfiscal by the legislative counsel.

COMMENTS:

1) *Author's Statement:* The author's experience as a Special Olympics coach and as a special education teacher inspired his on-going commitment to Special Olympics and their amazing athletes. The author further states that he continues to volunteer at the annual Special Olympics Summer Games in Southern California. According to the author, "The Special Olympics helps individuals with intellectual disabilities gain a sense of belonging and achievement and that the unity that is fostered by these games is beautiful to witness. I strongly encourage that there must be continued funding for this beautiful program. Special Olympics is the world's largest sports organization for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, providing year-round training and competitions to more than 5,300,000 million athletes and Unified Sports partners in 170 countries. The Special Olympics is the world's largest public health organization for people with intellectual disabilities and offers a wide range of free health exams and care."

2) *Prior Related Legislation.*

ACR 58 (Grayson), Chapter 56, Statutes of 2019, proclaims April 8, 2019, as Special Olympics Day in California.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

There is no support on file.

Opposition

There is no opposition on file.

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