STATE *of* MINNESOTA

Proclamation

WHEREAS: Individuals with disabilities are highly skilled, valuable contributors to Minnesota's workforce and enrich our economy and communities, however, the unemployment rate for people in Minnesota with one or more disabilities is 7.2 percent, compared to 3.5 percent for people without disabilities.; and

WHEREAS: The Minnesota Human Rights Act underscores the necessary advancement of equal opportunities for employees and job applicants with disabilities; and

WHEREAS: Minnesota employers play a key role in fostering inclusive workplaces and hiring employees with disabilities; and

WHEREAS: Minnesota acknowledges the long-standing history of isolation and discrimination against people with disabilities, while recognizing the decades of activism and advocacy by the disability community for equal access to fulfilling employment; and

WHEREAS: Minnesota, in accordance with its Olmstead Plan, is dedicated to offering a continuum of work options for people with disabilities, focusing on person-centered solutions that meet individual needs and preferences; and

WHEREAS: The Walz-Flanagan Administration prioritizes competitive and integrated employment for people with disabilities, issued an executive order developing best practices for recruitment and retention of individuals with disabilities, and oversaw creation of the State Employment & Retention of Employees with Disabilities Task Force to investigate and provide recommendations to increase employment of people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS: In 2023, the administration oversaw the launch of the Reasonable Accommodation Program, reimbursing Minnesota employees for expenses associated with reasonable accommodations, and, under the administration's leadership, Minnesota increased state employment of people with disabilities from 7.1% in 2019 to 11.7% in 2023; and

WHEREAS: Each October, government, nonprofit, and business organizations celebrate Disability Employment Awareness Month, highlighting the contributions of workers with disabilities and promoting inclusive employment policies and practices that benefit employers and employees alike.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, TIM WALZ, Governor of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim October 2026 as:

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

in the State of Minnesota.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Minnesota to be affixed at the State Capitol this 30th day of September.

GOVERNOR

SECRETARY OF STATE