

This Document can be made available in alternative formats upon request

State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FOURTH SESSION

H. F. No. 4853

04/07/2026

Authored by Virnig

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on State Government Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to state government; requiring state-funded playgrounds to use inclusive
1.3 design standards; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter
1.4 256.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. 256.4823 INCLUSIVE AND UNIVERSALLY DESIGNED
1.7 PLAYGROUNDS.

1.8 Subdivision 1. Requirement. (a) Playgrounds constructed or substantially renovated
1.9 using state funding must incorporate principles of universal design to ensure accessible and
1.10 inclusive play opportunities for individuals with and without disabilities.

1.11 (b) Inclusive design features must be incorporated to the maximum extent feasible within
1.12 the scope of the project and available project funding.

1.13 (c) For purposes of this section:

1.14 (1) "State funding" means money appropriated by the legislature or distributed through
1.15 a state-administered grant program, including state fund appropriations and bond proceeds.

1.16 (2) "Substantially renovated" means replacing 50 percent or more of play equipment or
1.17 modifying the play area footprint, surfacing system, or primary accessible routes.

1.18 Subd. 2. Inclusive playground design considerations. Playground planning and design
1.19 under this section must consider accessibility and usability across the entire play environment,
1.20 including but not limited to:

1.21 (1) accessible routes and travel surfaces;

2.1 (2) play equipment and play activities designed to support participation by individuals
2.2 with a wide range of physical, sensory, and cognitive abilities;

2.3 (3) sensory play opportunities;

2.4 (4) signage and wayfinding features within or directly serving the playground area;

2.5 (5) seating, gathering areas, and spaces for supervision by caregivers;

2.6 (6) shade, shelter, and environmental comfort features; and

2.7 (7) accessible amenities, including restrooms, benches, and picnic areas.

2.8 Subd. 3. **Universal design principles.** Entities receiving state funding for playground
2.9 development must incorporate the Seven Principles of Universal Design, as established by
2.10 the Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University, or equivalent inclusive
2.11 design standards.

2.12 Subd. 4. **Design expertise.** Playground design must be reviewed by an individual with
2.13 demonstrated expertise in playground safety, accessibility, or inclusive design, which may
2.14 include a certified playground safety inspector or Minnesota certified accessibility specialist.

2.15 Subd. 5. **Implementation guidance.** (a) The Department of Natural Resources, in
2.16 consultation with the Minnesota Council on Disability, may develop guidance and best
2.17 practices to support implementation of inclusive and universally designed playgrounds
2.18 receiving state funding.

2.19 (b) Implementation guidance developed under this section may include recommendations
2.20 related to accessible surfacing, ground-level play components, transfer systems, and
2.21 proportional accessibility based on playground size and complexity.