

EMANUEL CLEAVER, II

FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
HOUSING AND INSURANCE SUBCOMMITTEE
RANKING MEMBER
CAPITAL MARKETS SUBCOMMITTEE



FIFTH DISTRICT, MISSOURI

COMMISSION ON SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE
(HELSINKI COMMISSION)
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

December 6, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

For centuries, International Sports have been a forum for diplomacy, dating back almost 3,000 years with the first Olympic Games in Greece. Sports has been a vital outlet to bring people, nations, and institutions together. The United States' involvement in the international sports arena strengthens global engagement, facilitates cultural exchange, enhances American influence, and fosters diplomatic dialogue. Therefore, the United States hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup is instrumental in enhancing the United States' global image, and our federal government has a responsibility to ensure the 2026 FIFA World Cup's success.

The 2026 FIFA World Cup is a momentous event for the United States. The United States has not hosted the World Cup in 30 years. The last World Cup, in 1994, was the most-attended event in FIFA history, with a record-breaking 32.1 billion viewers across 188 countries. Furthermore, the short-term economic impact of the 2026 World Cup is expected to be more than \$5 billion, and it would support an estimated 40,000 jobs. Host cities can expect anywhere from \$160 to \$620 million in economic activity. Hosting the World Cup also brings long term economic benefits to host cities and countries such as global media exposure, which in turn boosts long term tourism. The 2026 FIFA World Cup will be historic for the United States' economy and global image.

With such a historic event, however, comes challenges. One issue that has grown of increasing concern is criminal activity and violence at sporting events. Some of these incidents include property destruction, throwing objects, swarming, fighting, shootings, stabbings, and in some extreme cases, acts of terrorism. A recent example occurred in my hometown, during the Kansas City Chiefs Super Bowl parade and rally where one individual was shot and killed, and dozens of others were injured. This incident, alongside many others, emphasizes the need for ensuring public safety at large sporting events. These concerns also persist after Copa América, which had to delay the game more than an hour due to thousands of fans breaching security, which led the

Miami-Dade Police Department to dispatch more than 550 officers. Public safety is of the utmost importance for the 2026 FIFA World Cup and should be a priority in funding for the World Cup. Projections note that full safety and security costs for the 11 host cities will total around \$625 million, far exceeding what many communities can easily put together without federal support.

Another challenge that presents itself as preparations begin is the transportation capabilities of each host city. Many host cities have begun planning transportation for fans to and from airports, around the cities, and to the stadiums. However, many cities lack the infrastructure or funding to support the transportation needs of such a large sporting event. Many of the host cities do not have mass transit systems. In Dallas, in order to get fans to the stadium the Trinity Railway Express or TRE will run at peak frequency with maximum car lengths, and 50 DART vehicles will use Interstate 30 to get from Victory Station to a bus staging area near the stadium. The city will also have to utilize a private shuttle system to get fans to the stadium. In Kansas City, the number of buses required to transport fans far exceeds the number of buses the RideKC system has in its fleet. Furthermore, the city does not possess a light rail system like other host cities, and the city lacks transportation from the airport to downtown. Host cities want a seamless experience for fans visiting for the World Cup, which requires a seamless transportation system. Many cities however do not have the financial or infrastructural capabilities to ensure an adequate transportation system.

The 2026 World Cup faces many other issues ranging from accessibility needs to translation services to visas. In light of these challenges, we encourage the Committee, as you evaluate FY25 funding requests, to fully assess the need for the 2026 FIFA World Cup and provide robust support to ensure the 2026 FIFA World Cup host cities can provide an enjoyable experience for all spectators. Whether this comes through the annual appropriations bill, a continuing resolution, or even a standalone funding package, support for this event is a key national priority. I hope the entire Congress is able to come together in a bipartisan way to meet this moment and ensure the success of the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Emanuel Cleaver, II". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress