

Hoyer-sponsored Resolution Pass House to Allow 69th Running of Derby on Capitol Grounds; Maryland Racers Have Won Last Three Competitions

WASHINGTON, DC- The House of Representatives approved a resolution today sponsored by Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) to allow the 69th annual [Greater Washington Soap Box Derby](#) to be held on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol. This is the 20th year Rep. Hoyer has sponsored the resolution, which draws youth from around the National Capital Region to compete in “the greatest amateur racing event in the world.” The competition will take place on Saturday, June 19, on Constitution Avenue, NW, between New Jersey and Louisiana Avenues.

“I am proud to be a sponsor of legislation to enable our region’s Soap Box Derby racers to use the hill on which the U.S. Capitol stands to participate in this truly American tradition,” **stated Rep. Hoyer.** “The Soap Box Derby has been called ‘the greatest amateur racing event in the world,’ and lives up to that reputation by reaching out to our youth, and teaching them the importance of community, responsibility, and hard work.”

On June 19, racers will compete in three divisions: Stock, Super Stock, and Masters. The local winner of each division will automatically qualify to compete with racers from around the world in the 73rd All-American Soap Box Derby in Akron, Ohio on July 24.

“As the representative for Maryland’s Fifth District, I’m proud to note that my district has been home to a string of soap box derby champions,” **said Hoyer.** “Southern Maryland has produced the last three winners of the Greater Washington Race – two of whom went on to win the National Soap Box Derby championship. June’s race will be the continuation of a proud tradition for our country and its capital, and for all of this year’s racers who have worked so hard preparing for the competition.”

In 2007, Kacie Rader from Mechanicsville won the Greater Washington race and went on to become the first Marylander to win the National Soap Box Derby title. The following year Courtney Rayle, also from Mechanicsville, also won the Greater Washington race and went on to place first at the national race in Akron, Ohio. Last year, her brother, Justin Rayle, made it three Greater Washington wins in a row for Maryland’s Fifth District, and took fourth place in Akron.

The origin of soap box derby racing dates back to 1934 when a photographer for the Dayton Daily News, Myron E. Scott, saw boys racing engineless cars down a hill, inspiring him to organize a race and award the winner with a cup. While the first race took place in Dayton, OH, in the following years, the venue moved to Akron on account of the numerous hills. With the hard work of countless civic organizations, a permanent track site for the youth racing classic was created with the assistance of President Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal program the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

Soap box derby racing in the Nation’s Capital has a long and rich tradition as well. In 1938, Norman Rocca beat out 223 other racers to win the inaugural Greater Washington Soap Box Derby, which was held on New Hampshire

Hoyer Bill Clears Road for Greater Washington-Area Soap Box Derby on June 19

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Avenue. Over nearly seven decades, thousands of the region's young people have come to Washington to take their place in a great race and a great tradition. The location has since moved from the original site on New Hampshire Avenue to Capitol Hill.

For more information see the All-American Soap Box Derby Web site at www.aasbd.org

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