

WASHINGTON, DC –Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) today released the following statement after a resolution he sponsored to permit the 65th race of the “Greater Washington Soap Box Derby” to take place on the grounds of the United States Capitol passed the House of Representatives.

“For the 16th straight year, I am proud to sponsor the resolution allowing the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby Association to hold its annual race on the grounds of the United States Capitol.

“H. Con. Res. 349 authorizes the Architect of the Capitol and the Capitol Police Board to work with the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby Association to ensure that all the necessary arrangements are made to conduct this race in complete compliance with the rules and regulations governing the use of the Capitol grounds. The 65th Annual Greater Washington Soap Box Derby will be held on Saturday, June 17.

“Soap box derby racing in our nation’s capital has a long and rich tradition. In 1938, Norman Rocca beat out 223 other racers to win the inaugural Greater Washington Soap Box Derby, which was held on New Hampshire Avenue. Over the years, thousands of the region’s young people have participated in this great race. Although the location has moved from the original site on New Hampshire Ave. to Capitol Hill, with stops on Massachusetts Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue, and Eastern Avenue along the way, the essence of the race has remained the same: home made gravity-powered cars, the spirit of competition, and the pure joy of racing.

“The soap box derby consists of dozens of drivers, both boys and girls, ranging in age from 8 to 17. These racers are divided into three divisions: stock, super stock, and masters. The local winner of each division will qualify to compete with racers from around the world in the 69th All-American Soap Box Derby in Akron, Ohio on July 22.

“The festivities in Akron begin when the racers receive a police escort into town and conclude in the winner’s circle with the awarding of scholarships and merchandise. In between, the racers and their families participate in a whirlwind of activities that leave them with enduring friendships and memories to last a lifetime.

“The past six years the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby has had one of its participants

finish in the top 10 at the All-American race. In fact, last year's master's division champion, Robbie Reuss of Waldorf, finished an impressive 2nd in Akron. Robbie's finish surpassed Gene Bean's 3rd in the 1941 All-American and is the best finish ever for a representative of the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby. I am very proud of Robbie and I am hopeful that this might finally be the year when one of our racers from the Greater Washington area is finally crowned world champion.

"This event has been called "the greatest amateur racing event in the world" and it is an excellent opportunity for the contestants from the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia to learn basic building skills while gaining a real sense of accomplishment."

For more information see the All-American's web site at [www.aasbd.org](http://www.aasbd.org).

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