

May 8, 2022

Honorary State Representative Bill Roemer
Capitol Office
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Honorary State Representative Bob Young
Capitol Office
77 South High Street
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: H.B. 423 Designating the All-American Soap Box Derby as the official state gravity racing program

Honorable State Representatives:

My name is Linda Hubbell, and I am the Education Director for the International Soap Box Derby, Inc., an Akron, Ohio-based nonprofit organization that administers the All-American Soap Box Derby®, a youth gravity racing program which has run nationally since 1934.

I am writing this letter to strongly support House Bill 423 which would designate the All-American Soap Box Derby as the official gravity racing program for the State of Ohio. Being designated as Ohio's gravity racing program would be such an honor for a program, that for more than eighty years, has impacted the lives, not only of Ohio youth, but also the lives of more than a million youth worldwide.

First held in 1934, during the Great Depression, in Dayton, Ohio, the All-American Soap Box Derby® served as a beacon of hope and light for, not only the 362 youth who built and raced their homemade cars, but also for the over 40,000 spectators who cheered, embraced, and celebrated these youth as well as this monumental gravity racing event in Ohio's history.

Despite any hardships or economic obstacles these first All-American Soap Box Derby® racers faced, they continually persevered and overcame—relying on their tenacity, resourcefulness, work ethic, and strong community and family support to successfully construct and race their Soap Box Derby cars.

Today, the All-American Soap Box Derby® continues its rich, historic tradition and positive impact on youths' lives worldwide as well as its mission to youth to build knowledge and character, and to create meaningful experiences through collaboration, fair and honest racing competitions, STEM curriculum, and other community-focused activities which support and promote various aspects of youths' overall academic, life, and career skill development.

The All-American Soap Box Derby® is also symbolic of the people of Ohio—hardworking and tenacious who embrace ingenuity, craftsmanship, innovation, family, and community.

I respectfully ask, that you accept H.B. 423 in its current form to designate the All-American Soap Box Derby® as the “gravity-racing state symbol for Ohio” because of its:

- Notable Ohio historic founding, recognition, and gravity-racing tradition
- Continual contributions to and positive impact on Ohio's youth, families, and communities
- Symbolic representation of the people of Ohio

Sincerely,

Linda M. Hubbell

Linda M. Hubbell
Education Director
International Soap Box Derby, Inc.
Phone: 740.817.0345
Email: linda@soapboxderby.org