

WITNESS INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the Witness Information Form before testifying:

Date: 5/9/2022

Name: Mark Gerberich

Are you representing: Yourself Organization

Organization (If Applicable): International Soap Box Derby, Inc.

Position/Title: President & CEO

Address: 1000 George Washington Blvd.

City: Akron State: OH Zip: 44312

Best Contact Telephone: 330 329-7394 Email: mark@soapboxderby.org

Do you wish to be added to the committee notice email distribution list? Yes No

Business before the committee

Legislation (Bill/Resolution Number): HB 423

Specific Issue: Recognizing Soap Box Derby as Official Gravity Race of Ohio

Are you testifying as a: Proponent Opponent Interested Party

Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute? Yes No

(If yes, please send an electronic version of the documents, if possible, to the Chair's office prior to committee. You may also submit hard copies to the Chair's staff prior to committee.)

How much time will your testimony require? 5-10 minutes

Please provide a brief statement on your position:

The Soap Box Derby has been an iconic brand in Ohio since 1934 and hosting 83 world championships in Akron since 1935. We believe that this recognition would align the partnership with the State of Ohio and the Soap Box Derby.

Please be advised that this form and any materials (written or otherwise) submitted or presented to this committee are records that may be requested by the public and may be published online.

TO THE SPEAKER OF THE OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
134TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Pursuant to House Rules 111 and 112, I hereby notify the Chair that I am requesting to photograph, audiotape, video record or video broadcast a portion of the Committee hearing of the House of Representatives.

Name: MARK GERBERICH

Organization: INTERNATIONAL SOAP BOX DERBY

Purpose: FILM PRESENTATION

Committee: _____ Date: 5/10/22 Time: 10:30

For House Member (if applicable): _____

Please check all that apply:

Legislative Correspondents' Association or Radio and Television Correspondents' Association member?

Yes No

If "No," have you received temporary credentials from the appropriate Association?

Yes No

I hereby request to be granted access to:

Photograph Audio record Video record Video broadcast

5/9/22
(Date)

Mark Gerberich
(Signature)

Request to **photograph/audio record/video record** approved:

(Signature of Committee Chair)

Request to **video broadcast** approved:

(Signature of Committee Chair)

(House Clerk *pp.* Speaker of the House)

****Pursuant to House Rule 120, and without exception, the video or audio recording of any portion of the committee may not be used in political or commercial activities.***

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 Mark Gerberich, President & CEO, 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 our 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 students in Ohio, who are learning STEM through experiential learning and life skills through competition.

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 hosting the 84th annual world championships this year at historic Derby Downs in Akron.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Gerberich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mark Gerberich
President & CEO
International Soap Box Derby
1000 George Washington Blvd.
Akron, OH 44312