



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

NYS Legislature welcomes Watkins Glen International to Albany: O'Mara, Palmesano and Friend sponsor resolution proclaiming 'Motorsports Appreciation Week' (UPDATED: Watch Senator O'Mara's floor remarks)

THOMAS F. O'MARA March 26, 2019

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Watkins Glen International has long stood as a mainstay of our regional culture and economy. It is one of New York State's premier destinations, a backbone of our leading tourism industry, and a driving force for countless charitable, community service, and economic development initiatives. Very simply, we are fortunate to call Watkins Glen International one of our own.

Albany, N.Y., March 26—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats), Assemblyman Phil Palmesano (R,C,I-Corning) and Assemblyman Chris Friend (R,C,I-Big Flats) on Tuesday welcomed **Watkins Glen International (WGI)** President Michael Printup, professional driver Colin Braun, and WGI Director of Public Relations Chris Banker to the State Capitol to celebrate the contributions of motorsports to the economy and culture of the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, and the entire state.

According to Braun's online biography (colinbraun.com), "At only 29 years old, professional race car driver Colin Braun already has a remarkable 24 years of racing experience under his belt. A native of Ovalo, Texas, Colin grew up in a racing family, and from the beginning, there was little doubt about the direction of Colin's career path. From his days winning in Quarter Midgets all the way to winning in NASCAR and Sports Cars, Colin has consistently demonstrated his speed, experience, and maturity." Among his career highlights, Braun has won the 24 Hours of Daytona, 12 Hours of Sebring, 6 Hours of Watkins Glen, and multiple IMSA Championships, as well as finishing on the podium at the 24 Hours of LeMans and Petit LeMans.

Together, the group officially opened a New York State Motorsports Exhibit in the Empire State Plaza and the State Senate is adopting a legislative resolution sponsored by O'Mara, Palmesano and Friend (**J774**) proclaiming March 24-30, 2019 as "Motorsports Appreciation Week" in New York State.

In a joint statement, O'Mara, Palmesano, and Friend said, "It is our privilege to join our legislative colleagues in paying tribute to one of the world's iconic sporting venues. Across the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, we all take great pride in the fact that The Glen has resonated so powerfully throughout the history of American motorsports for more than six decades. Watkins Glen International has long stood as a mainstay of our regional culture and economy. It is one of New York State's premier destinations, a backbone of our leading

tourism industry, and a driving force for countless charitable, community service, and economic development initiatives. Very simply, we are fortunate to call Watkins Glen International one of our own.”

[\[View Senator O'Mara's remarks on the floor of the State Senate today\]](#)

WGI was lauded for being home to the state’s largest sporting event, the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race weekend each August, which attracts fans from all 50 states and 16 countries around the world. WGI events annually generate over \$200 million in economic activity across the region and account for more than 2,000 local jobs.

The Legislative Resolution, which received unanimous approval, reads, in part, “Having a global fan base in the millions, motorsports is one of the most popular and fastest growing sports in the world.”

WGI celebrated its 65th Anniversary in 2014. Last August, for the third consecutive year, a USA Today online readers’ poll selected **The Glen as “America’s Best NASCAR Track.”** Located within five hours of 25% of the United States population, WGI is also the premier road racing facility in North America.