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## **WCSA HOSTS 2012 GIRO D'ITALIA RECEPTION AT EMBASSY OF ITALY**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The [Washington Convention and Sports Authority](#) (WCSA) sponsored a reception Thursday, February 25 at the architecturally striking Embassy of Italy in support of Washington, D.C.'s bid to host two stages of the 2012 Giro d'Italia. The event's theme was *'History Is Made But Once. Bringing the 2012 Giro d'Italia to Washington, D.C.'*

"The reception was a huge step towards bringing the 2012 Giro d'Italia to the nation's capital," said Mark Sommers, chair of the U.S. stage working group. "We look forward to finalizing the bid and making this historic event a reality."

More than 150 people gathered for presentations and videos about proposed first U.S. stages of the European grand cycling tour. The evening's speakers included Gregory O'Dell, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Washington Convention and Sports Authority, Washington, D.C. Mayor Adrian M. Fenty, H.E. Ambassador Giulio Terzi, Ambassador of Italy to the U.S., Giro d'Italia Race Director Angelo Zomegnan, and Sommers. Famed Italian bicycle builder Ernesto Colnago was on hand to present a personalized Colnago bicycle to Mayor Fenty, and NY Knicks forward Danilo Gallinari from Sant'Angelo, Italy attended in support of the effort.

"The Giro d'Italia would be like few other sporting events the city has ever hosted," said O'Dell. "And the fact that it will boost the local economy and the District's international standing has made us even more excited about doing this."

Two U.S. stages are contemplated--a Saturday individual time trial and a Sunday circuit road race. Both stages would be held in the nation's capital. These are the only U.S. stages contemplated for the 2012 Giro d'Italia. While the courses for the two stages have not been finalized, the routes can be expected to include Washington, D.C.'s iconic and best-known monuments, memorials, buildings, and statues, including those of particular significance to Italians and Italian Americans, such as the Watergate Complex, Memorial Bridge, Embassy of Italy, and U.S. Capitol Building.

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While staging this grand-scale international sports event will bring significant economic impact and further push professional cycling into mainstream sport, it will also help drive current social trends to use cycling as a means to increase overall health and fitness for all ages and all demographics (including First Lady Michelle Obama's initiatives against childhood obesity), relieve traffic congestion and intra-city travel through bike lanes and public bike rental programs, and reduce metropolitan and regional carbon footprints.

### **About the Washington Convention and Sports Authority**

The Washington Convention and Sports Authority (WCSA) creates economic and community benefits for the District through the attraction and promotion of hospitality, athletic, entertainment and cultural events. The Authority owns and manages the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, an anchor of the District's hospitality and tourism economy that generates over \$400 million annually in total economic impact for the city. The Authority also owns and manages the Stadium-Armory campus, which includes Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium, the DC Armory and the surrounding Festival Grounds, and serves as the owner and landlord for Nationals Park. For more information, please visit [www.wcsa.com](http://www.wcsa.com).

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