

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 12

BY SENATORS BERNARD AND BOUDREAUX

A RESOLUTION

To commend Walter Imahara on being inducted into the 2023 class of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame.

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame in Natchitoches, Louisiana, each year collaborates with the Louisiana Sports Writers Association in selecting a limited number of sports figures who embody the character, skill, and talent worthy of being named to the Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, the 2023 Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame Induction Class includes Walter Imahara; and

WHEREAS, Walter Imahara is a six-time United States of America national champion in the 60 kg (132-pound) weight class while competing in the press, snatch, and clean and jerk; he is a member of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Athletics Hall of Fame and the Louisiana Weightlifting Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, Walter Imahara became the first Asian to attend the Southwestern Louisiana Institute (SLI), now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, in the mid-1950s where he was nicknamed the "Asian-Cajun" by the school president, and graduated with a degree in horticulture in 1960; and

WHEREAS, Walter Imahara joined the SLI weightlifting team and was an All-American when the program won the 1957 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) team title, the first-ever for the school; and

WHEREAS, he was the NCAA Featherweight Champion in 1957, 1959, and 1960, improving his total each time, lifting a total of 645 pounds in 1957, 695 pounds in 1959, and 725 pounds in 1960 when he was named an All-American, earned "Best Lifter" acclaim, and won the 1960 Junior National crown; and

WHEREAS, a longtime Baton Rouge resident and businessman, Walter Imahara won his first national professional weightlifting titles in 1962 and 1963 while serving the United States Army and winning four consecutive titles from 1965 to 1968 representing the New Orleans Athletic Club; and

WHEREAS, Walter Imahara won eight Senior National crowns, the 1967 Pan Am Gold Medal, eight Southern Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) crowns, six Louisiana State crowns, two Southern USA championships, and he was the National Masters Champion from 1980 to 2005; and

WHEREAS, in 2000 and 2002, Walter Imahara was a recipient of the Grand Slam Award given to athletes who have competed in and won all four major Masters events in one year: National Masters Championships, Pan American Masters Championships, World Masters Championships, and American Masters Championships; and

WHEREAS, prior to retiring from competition at the age of 68, Walter Imahara held 68 national records, 35 Pan American marks, 42 World Masters-Masters Games records, and had been the chairman of the International Weightlifting Federation-Masters Program for 20 years.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Walter Imahara on being inducted into the 2023 class of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Walter Imahara.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE