

1 WHEREAS, Burnett's legacy with the Southland Conference includes the league
2 emerging as a key leader in the evolution of the NCAA Division I Football Championship
3 Subdivision (FCS), formerly known as Division I-AA, along with initiatives bolstering the
4 overall competitiveness and NCAA post-season success of league members, as well as the
5 academic performance of its institutions and their student-athletes, with an emphasis on
6 promoting community service and the well-being of the student-athletes; and

7 WHEREAS, Burnett led a successful community-wide effort to bring the NCAA
8 Division I Football Championship Game to the Southland Conference's home base of Frisco,
9 Texas, and the league has served as the host conference for the national title contest at
10 Toyota Stadium since 2011; and

11 WHEREAS, television exposure for the Southland Conference grew exponentially
12 under his watch with the expansion of national and regional coverage, including the
13 Southland Conference's broadcast agreement with ESPN Networks that ultimately turned
14 into a multi-million dollar deal for the Southland Conference; and

15 WHEREAS, in 2014, the Southland Conference became the first FCS conference to
16 implement full NCAA football instant replay for all home games, and later formed an
17 officiating consortium with the Big XII Conference and the Mountain West Conference; and

18 WHEREAS, Burnett was presented the National Football Federation's Legacy Award
19 in 2022, recognizing his significant impact on the college game; and

20 WHEREAS, prior to joining the Southland Conference, Burnett spent nearly eleven
21 years in numerous roles with the Sun Belt Conference in New Orleans, including stints as
22 associate and assistant commissioner and director of communications; and

23 WHEREAS, Tom Burnett has held roles at the American South Conference and
24 Louisiana Tech, and he now heads Southwest Sports Partners, an athletic administrative
25 consulting firm in Frisco, Texas.

26 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
27 commend Tom Burnett upon receiving the 2024 Dave Dixon Louisiana Sports Leadership
28 Award and on being inducted into the 2024 class of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Tom
30 Burnett.

