

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 46

BY SENATOR SEABAUGH

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To commend Tom Burnett upon receiving the 2024 Dave Dixon Louisiana Sports Leadership Award and on being inducted into the 2024 class of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame.

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

WHEREAS, the Dave Dixon Louisiana Sports Leadership Award is a prestigious honor presented annually by the Louisiana Sports Writers Association to an individual who has played a decisive role as a sports leader or administrator benefitting Louisiana and/or bringing credit to Louisiana on the national and international level; and

WHEREAS, Tom Burnett, a graduate of Louisiana Tech University and West Monroe High School, has attained one of the most prestigious roles in college sports, serving as the chair of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I's Men's Basketball Committee for the 2021-2022 season to culminate five years on that panel; and

WHEREAS, Burnett is the longest-tenured commissioner in the history of the Southland Conference, serving in the role from December 2002 through May 2022; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES