

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 70

BY SENATOR BERNARD

A RESOLUTION

To commend Villis P. "Bo" Dowden upon his extraordinary career as a world-renowned bass fisherman and to congratulate him upon his induction into 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, and talents worthy of being enshrined into the Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame was created in 1958 to honor the state's greatest athletes, men and women, amateur and professional, who have become figures of national or international renown, and to enshrine the state's immortals in the field of athletics; and

WHEREAS, Villis P. "Bo" Dowden is one of the most respected and decorated bass fishermen in the history of the sport; and

WHEREAS, Bo is a native of Natchitoches Parish, and a 1964 graduate of Northwestern State University, and he developed a love for bass fishing at Toledo Bend since it was impounded in 1967; and

WHEREAS, upon graduation from Northwestern, he honorably served his country in the Louisiana National Guard; and

WHEREAS, Bo joined the B.A.S.S. Masters Tour during its infancy, helped popularize the tour, cemented "flippin'" as the go-to tactic amongst anglers everywhere, and was among the first to utilize "jig and pork" bait for bass fishing; and

WHEREAS, in 1971, B.A.S.S. founder Ray Scott created the "world championship" bass tournament, the Bassmaster Classic, now commonly referred to as the Super Bowl of bass fishing; and

WHEREAS, after a second place finish in 1976, and a third place finish in the 1978 Bassmaster Classic, Bo became known as the "bridesmaid" of the tour; and

WHEREAS, his career reached its pinnacle in 1980, while shedding his bridesmaid moniker and capturing the Bassmaster Classic championship; and

WHEREAS, Bo qualified for fourteen Bassmaster Classic World Championships throughout his career which spanned four decades; and

WHEREAS, he started Bo's Marine in 1972, a mainstay in the Natchitoches community for over seventeen years, selling boats, motors, and providing repair work; and

WHEREAS, after retiring from the B.A.S.S. tour, Bo became a licenced realtor and broker; he established Bo Dowden & Associates Real Estate in Many, Louisiana, where he works with his sons, Villis Jr. and Eason, as well as his wife Gladys; and

WHEREAS, Bo looks back at his fishing exploits with a sense of accomplishment, and his business career with a sense of satisfaction; his greatest source of pride is in his family: wife, Gladys; sons, Villis Jr. and Eason; daughter, Merideth; and his three grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, he merits a sincere measure of recognition for his extraordinary accomplishments in sports and in life and has earned a special place among the many greats in the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Villis P. "Bo" Dowden on his phenomenal fishing career and does hereby congratulate him upon his induction into the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame on August 28, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby note the good works and great pride that he has bestowed upon the state of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Villis P. "Bo" Dowden.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE