HJR154

A3A9QQS-1

By Representatives Smith, Bedsole

RFD: RULES

First Read: 04-Apr-24

HJR____ COMMENDING ALABAMA PRO ANGLER DUSTIN CONNELL ON HIS SIXTH BASS PRO TOUR WIN AND ON BEING NAMED THE FIRST-EVER TWO-TIME WINNER OF THE BASS PRO SHOPS REDCREST COMPETITION.

WHEREAS, highest commendations and congratulations are herein proudly conveyed to Alabama's own Dustin Connell for scoring his sixth Bass Pro Tour Win at REDCREST 2024 Powered by Optima Lithium on Lay Lake in Alabama, making him the first-ever two-time winner of the Bass Pro Shops REDCREST competition, having claimed the title in 2021; this championship win is his second of the 2024 season after having won his fifth Bass Pro Shops Major League Fishing Championship at Stage One on Toledo Bend earlier this year; and

WHEREAS, a native of Clanton, Alabama, Dustin Connell developed a love and drive for fishing at a very young age; he learned from his older brother, James, and followed him to ponds and lakes to fish every chance he could; for hours at a time, he would fish for bass at Lay Lake; this experience gave him the home lake advantage for his first place win on March 17, 2024; and

WHEREAS, after fishing for fun for many years, he competed in his first bass tournament with his brother when he was only 12 years old; they ended up in second place and he won $100; he later said, "The thrill of the hunt, the

competition, the paycheck - every part of that first event got me hooked on tournament fishing"; and

WHEREAS, a Chilton County High School Class of 2008 graduate, Dustin Connell matriculated to The University of Alabama and earned a Bachelor of Science in Marketing, a degree program he chose to help him work with sponsors as a pro angler, which was always his motivating goal; he continued to fish every tournament he could as a high school and college angler; but he had to work long, hard hours in construction after college in order to be in a position to pursue tournament fishing full-time; and

WHEREAS, his determination and efforts paid off, and in 2017 he claimed an Elite Series win and was named B.A.S.S. Rookie of the Year; in 2018, he earned an invitation to join Major League Fishing (MLF) on the Bass Pro Tour; and

WHEREAS, winning Stage Three of the 2022 Bass Pro Tour pushed him to nearly $1 million in career earnings, and he followed it up with a win at Stage Six of the 2022 Bass Pro Tour and a win at Stage One of the 2024 Bass Pro Tour; this win made Dustin Connell one of the winningest anglers in Bass Pro Tour history as only Jacob Wheeler and Ott DeFoe had won three or more events on the Bass Pro Tour; he capped off the 2022 season with his fourth Bass Pro Tour win at Stage Seven at Mille Lacs Lake; and

WHEREAS, in 2024, Dustin Connell scored his fifth Bass Pro Tour win at Stage One on Toledo Bend; this remarkable achievement earned him the first-place prize of

$100,000 at the MLF Bass Pro Tour B&W Trailer Hitches Stage One at Toledo Bend, sponsored by Power-Pole; his Championship Round total nearly doubled the rest of the 10-man field, earning the win by a whopping 44-pound, 2-ounce margin over the second place winner; Connell's total marked the biggest day for any angler during the event; and

WHEREAS, the occasion of Dustin Connell winning his sixth Bass Pro Tour Major League Fishing Competition is an accomplishment to be celebrated; this triumph won him the first-place prize of $300,000; his dedication, strong desire for success, constant training, and tireless and diligent efforts to achieve excellence serve as a valuable example to aspiring athletes across the country and in his home State of Alabama; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That we highly commend and congratulate Dustin Connell for his outstanding victory at the MLF Bass Pro Shops REDCREST 2024, clinching his sixth win on the Bass Pro Tour and making him the first-ever two-time winner of the REDCREST event, and we hereby dedicate this resolution to him with utmost admiration, along with sincere best wishes for continued success.