**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR CASEY ASHLEY, PROFESSIONAL FISHERMAN FROM ABBEVILLE COUNTY, FOR HIS FISHING ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND TO CONGRATULATE HIM ON TAKING TOP HONORS AT THE 2015 BASSMASTER CLASSIC.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly were pleased to learn that the Palmetto State’s own Casey Ashley of Donalds garnered the coveted 2015 Bassmaster Classic trophy on Lake Hartwell on Sunday, February 22, 2015; and

Whereas, first held in 1971 on Lake Mead, Nevada, the Bassmaster Classic is a competition in professional bass fishing, held at different locations every year, and the winner of the tournament is considered the world champion of bass fishing; and

Whereas, from 1971 to 1983, the event took place in the fall. The competition was moved to the summer in 1984, and then to the late winter in 2006, while it evolved into a three‑day pageant with dramatic presentations of the weigh‑ins and hours of televised coverage. First‑place prize money has grown from $10,000 in 1971 to $500,000 in 2006 and was reduced to $300,000 in 2014; and

Whereas, Casey Ashley entered the final day of the 2015 competition on Lake Hartwell in fifth place. On Sunday, he reeled in more than twenty pounds of fish, bringing his total to more than fifty pounds after the final weigh‑in and moving him into the tournament championship, using bait his father made for him. His three‑day catch weighed in at three pounds and two ounces over the second‑place contestant; and

Whereas, since he caught his first fish at the age of four, Ashley Casey wanted to be a fisherman, but his friends laughed at the idea of his becoming a professional fisherman. Twenty‑seven years later, he is now at the top of the sport, which is no laughing matter; and

Whereas, he was overjoyed to win the Bassmaster Classic, but winning it in the backyard of his home State in front of friends and family was an unparalleled honor; and

Whereas, after taking a victory lap around the Bon Secours Wellness Arena with his two‑year‑old son, Mr. Ashley took home the $300,000 cash winnings and earned a spot to compete in next year’s Bassmaster Classic; and

Whereas, the South Carolina General Assembly deeply appreciates the pride and recognition that Casey Ashley has brought to his community and to the Palmetto State, and the members look to hear of his continued success in the days ahead. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, recognize and honor Casey Ashley, professional fisherman from Abbeville County, for his fishing accomplishments and congratulate him on taking top honors at the 2015 Bassmaster Classic.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Casey Ashley.

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