

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 83

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator PATRICK J. DIEGNAN, JR.

District 18 (Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senator Ruiz

SYNOPSIS

Requests that National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum admit baseball legend John Donaldson into Hall of Fame.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **A SENATE RESOLUTION** requesting that the National Baseball Hall
2 of Fame and Museum admit baseball legend John Donaldson into
3 the Hall of Fame.
4
5 **WHEREAS**, The segregation in Major League Baseball prior to Jackie
6 Robinson breaking the color barrier in 1947 led to many Black and
7 Latino players' accomplishments being lost to history; and
8 **WHEREAS**, Despite the many recorded and word-of-mouth
9 achievements by Negro Leagues' players, only 35 players in the
10 Negro Leagues have been enshrined into the National Baseball Hall
11 of Fame and Museum in Cooperstown, New York; and
12 **WHEREAS**, At the height of the Negro Leagues in the first half of the
13 20th Century, the talent of the leagues rivaled that of the talent in
14 Major League Baseball; and
15 **WHEREAS**, One such player who deserves recognition from the
16 National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum is pitcher and
17 outfielder John Donaldson; and
18 **WHEREAS**, Born in Glasgow, Missouri, in 1891, John Donaldson is
19 arguably one of the greatest pitchers of his era, if not of all-time;
20 and
21 **WHEREAS**, During a career which spanned over 20 years, Donaldson
22 pitched in over 650 games and amassed over 400 victories, which
23 would place him in the same ranks as legendary pitchers Cy Young
24 and Walter Johnson; and
25 **WHEREAS**, Donaldson was a dominant left-handed pitcher, striking
26 out over 5,000 hitters during his career, including 35 during one 18-
27 inning game, and throwing 14 no-hitters and one perfect game; and
28 **WHEREAS**, Unlike most pitchers, Donaldson was also an
29 accomplished hitter with a batting average of .334 in over 1,800 at-
30 bats, and often batted lead-off while playing for the powerhouse
31 Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro National League; and
32 **WHEREAS**, Because of the segregation of professional baseball and the
33 lack of established Black leagues in the 1910s, Donaldson played
34 for various barnstorming teams, including some integrated teams,
35 traveling around the country impressing thousands of Americans
36 with his talent and demeanor on the mound; and
37 **WHEREAS**, Donaldson was so popular during his time that he was able
38 to form his own barnstorming team, the John Donaldson All-Stars,
39 to compete against both Black and White teams around the country;
40 and
41 **WHEREAS**, Donaldson would often face White major leaguers during
42 his barnstorming career, dominating them, and leading legendary
43 Hall of Fame manager John McGraw to call him the greatest he has
44 ever seen; and
45 **WHEREAS**, Following a 22-year career and the integration of Major
46 League Baseball, Donaldson became the first full-time Black scout
47 when he worked for the Chicago White Sox; and

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1 **WHEREAS**, As a scout, Donaldson saw the potential of legendary
2 players such as Willie Mays, Hank Aaron, and Ernie Banks and is
3 also credited with signing several prominent players from the Negro
4 Leagues; and

5 **WHEREAS**, Donaldson’s legacy is not completely forgotten as
6 researchers known as “The Donaldson Network” have worked
7 tirelessly to track down his achievements through old newspaper
8 clippings and video footage; and

9 **WHEREAS**, In light of his extraordinary achievements on the baseball
10 diamond and the effort almost 100 years later to preserve his
11 legacy, the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum should
12 admit John Donaldson into the Hall of Fame; now, therefore,

14 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

16 1. This House requests that the National Baseball Hall of Fame
17 and Museum in Cooperstown, New York admit baseball legend
18 John Donaldson for his extraordinary achievements throughout a
19 22-year career.

21 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
22 shall be transmitted by the Secretary of the Senate to the
23 Commissioner of Major League Baseball, the President of the
24 National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, and the Chairperson
25 of the Board of Directors of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and
26 Museum.

STATEMENT

31 This resolution requests that the National Baseball Hall of Fame
32 and Museum in Cooperstown, New York admit baseball legend
33 John Donaldson in the Hall of Fame.

John Donaldson was born in Glasgow, Missouri in 1891. From 1913 to 1934, Donaldson was arguably the greatest pitcher of his era, Black or White. He repeatedly earned praise from legends in Major League Baseball, such as John McGraw, further cementing his legacy. Throughout his 22-year career, Donaldson won over 400 games and struck out over 5,000 batters, two totals that would place Donaldson among the top two or three of MLB pitchers all-time.

Because of the segregation of baseball during his time, Donaldson barnstormed across the nation and Canada attracting thousands of fans to his game. Donaldson was the main attraction with his dominating pitching and showmanship on the mound. His popularity was so significant that he was able to form his own barnstorming team to play against White and Black teams.

1 Following his career, Donaldson enjoyed a successful career as a
2 scout for the Chicago White Sox. His achievements as a player
3 were significant enough to prompt a team of researchers, known as
4 “The Donaldson Network,” to track down any shred of evidence
5 related to Donaldson’s performances. Even with what is known
6 now, his career is more than worthy of consideration for the Hall of
7 Fame.

8 The Hall of Fame currently includes 35 players from the Negro
9 Leagues. Despite the talent, complete careers of talented Black
10 players during segregation are difficult to find. Donaldson should
11 not be denied entry into the Hall of Fame due to something outside
12 of his control. The Hall of Fame should admit Donaldson for his
13 extraordinary achievements throughout his 22-year career.