

E.L. “BUBBA” HENRY

E. L. "Bubba" Henry is a Baton Rouge attorney in the firm Adams and Reese. Admitted to the Louisiana Bar in 1961, he practiced law in Jonesboro, Louisiana, until 1980. Henry served as a member in the Louisiana House of Representatives from 1968 to 1980 from District 13 (Jackson, Bienville, and Ouachita parishes). He was House Speaker from 1972 to 1980. Henry was the elected Speaker with a proper balance between the "Young Turk" viewpoint and a traditional view of House operations. In 1973 he chaired the Constitutional Convention and was highly regarded for his ability to bring about consensus on divisive issues. In 1979, he ran unsuccessfully as a candidate in the open primary to succeed Edwin Edwards as Governor. In the run-off election, Henry was the first of four defeated Democrats to endorse Republican Dave Treen.

In 1980, as his legislative term ended, Henry became Commissioner of Administration in the administration of Governor Treen. As Commissioner, Henry pushed to fruition the plans and blueprints for the State Capitol Complex and the consolidation of state offices within the Capitol environs.

In his first term in the Legislature, Henry, at thirty-two, worked with a group of younger members who advocated reform. Called the "Young Turks," the group urged major changes in how the Legislature operated, including creating decorum in the House, removing lobbyists from the House floor, and bringing accountability to the appropriations process. They blazed a trail that led to a new state Constitution in 1973 and reforms impacting state government.

Henry's past affiliations include the Council for a Better Louisiana, the Public Affairs Research Council, the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry, Baton Rouge Sunrise Rotary Club, Louisiana Appleseed, State Capital Law Firm Group, and the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank. In 1974, Henry was honored in the Oval Office in Washington, D.C. by President Gerald R. Ford, Jr., who cited his "exemplary leadership," particularly in reference to his chairmanship of the Constitutional Convention. In the fall of 2001, Louisiana Life magazine named Henry one of twenty persons who have been "most influenced public policy in Louisiana during the past twenty years." And that designation came after his tenure in the Legislature had ended.

On the occasion of Henry's 70th birthday in 2006, the state House expressed "enduring gratitude" for his "outstanding contributions to the state." The House resolution also said that Henry "lives his life based on his faith in his Creator." Henry was inducted into the Louisiana Political Museum and Hall of Fame in Winnfield in 2012.

He married Frances Turner Henry in 1958 and they have two children, Patrick E. Henry and Lori Henry Taylor. Henry has served as Deacon and Trustee and has taught the Young Adult Sunday School class of University Baptist Church in Baton Rouge for many years.

Henry graduated from Jonesboro-Hodge High School and obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1957 from Baylor University in Waco, Texas. He earned his law degree and was graduated in 1961 from the Louisiana State University Law Center in Baton Rouge.