

SENATE RESOLUTION

8642

By Senators Saldaña, McCoy, Hobbs, Palumbo, Keiser, Takko, and Chase

1 WHEREAS, César Estrada Chávez was a world-changing American
2 activist, renowned as a champion of Latino American civil rights and
3 as an outspoken proponent of the American labor movement; and

4 WHEREAS, Chávez was born March 31, 1927, outside of Yuma,
5 Arizona; and from the age of twelve, he labored in California as a
6 farm worker; and

7 WHEREAS, In 1946, Chávez joined the United States Navy; he has
8 since received military honors for his service and is the only Latino
9 for whom a United States military ship is named; and

10 WHEREAS, Chávez contributed to this country not only through
11 military service, but also by actively working to promote equality
12 and freedom; and

13 WHEREAS, Inspired by his Catholic faith, Chávez embraced
14 nonviolence in the manner of Martin Luther King, Jr.; worked hard to
15 value the dignity of all types of occupations; and later, while
16 working for a civil rights group, taught people to solve their
17 problems collectively; and

18 WHEREAS, Chávez's nonviolent efforts, particularly between 1952
19 and 1976, brought the realities of the farm worker community to the
20 nation's attention; and

21 WHEREAS, Chávez cofounded the National Farm Workers Association
22 in 1962, which later became known as the United Farm Workers of

1 America (UFW), and worked hard to enroll Hispanic members in the
2 American labor movement; and

3 WHEREAS, César Chávez believed that farm workers deserved fair
4 treatment; his work brought numerous improvements for union laborers,
5 many of whom were underrepresented Latinos; and Chávez also made
6 lasting contributions to consumer and laborer health and safety
7 standards, including initiating the discontinued use of the short-
8 handled hoe, a tool that often resulted in debilitating back pain for
9 farm workers; and

10 WHEREAS, Chávez has become an iconic figure for organized labor
11 and Latino communities; he, along with Dolores Huerta, popularized
12 the phrase "*Sí, se puede*" or "Yes, one can," a saying that still
13 holds relevance today; and

14 WHEREAS, During his lifetime and long after his death on April
15 23, 1993, Chávez inspired generations of Latino youth to invest in a
16 life of service, to pursue education, and to give back to their
17 communities; and

18 WHEREAS, In 2014, former President Obama declared March 31st
19 César Chávez Day, honoring Chávez as one of America's greatest
20 champions for social justice;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate
22 recognize César Estrada Chávez for dedicating his life to serving
23 others and making the world a better place; and applaud his
24 remarkable work to gain respect, dignity, and justice for farm
25 workers, for the poor, and for all people during the celebration of
26 César Chávez Day, March 31st.

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