



HOUSE RESOLUTION 25-1004

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) Espenoza and Garcia Sander, Duran, Bacon, Barron, Bird, Boesenecker, Brown, Camacho, Carter, Clifford, English, Froelich, Gonzalez R., Hamrick, Jackson, Joseph, Lieder, Lindsay, Lindstedt, Lukens, Marshall, Martinez, Mauro, McCormick, Paschal, Phillips, Ricks, Rutinel, Rydin, Sirota, Smith, Stewart K., Stewart R., Story, Valdez, Woodrow, McCluskie.

CONCERNING RECOGNITION OF "CÉSAR CHÁVEZ DAY" AND HONORING DOLORES HUERTA.

WHEREAS, César Estrada Chávez was born on March 31, 1927, on a small farm near Yuma, Arizona, and was raised by migrant farm workers; and

WHEREAS, During the Great Depression, César Chávez's family, like many other families, became migrant workers. They joined hundreds of thousands of workers who followed crops to Southern California; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez left school after eighth grade to labor in the fields and vineyards of the Southwest to help support his family; and

WHEREAS, In 1944, at the age of 17, César Chávez joined the U.S. Navy and served his country until receiving an honorable discharge in 1946; and

WHEREAS, After experiencing years of discrimination and unfair working conditions, César Chávez dedicated his life to improving the plight of farm workers; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez and fellow activist Dolores Huerta formed the National Farm Workers Association in 1962, which later became the United Farm Workers of America (UFW), to help farm workers win equal rights and fair treatment; and

WHEREAS, Dolores Huerta, who was born in Dawson, New Mexico, in 1930, became a focused activist, organizer, and feminist and brought forward a unique voice on behalf of women to ensure economic justice for all workers; and

WHEREAS, In 1965, Chávez and Huerta organized a strike of California grape workers to demand higher wages and urged Americans to boycott table grapes as a show of support; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez believed in the principles of nonviolence practiced by Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and used tactics such as boycotts, marches, strikes, and fasts to gain millions of supporters and new members for farm labor unions across the United States; and

WHEREAS, By 1970, Chávez and the UFW had persuaded grape growers to accept union contracts and had successfully organized almost the entire industry; and

WHEREAS, During a fast by Chávez in 1972, Dolores Huerta coined the phrase "¡Sí se puede!", which in English means "Yes, it can be done!", reflecting a conviction that workers can successfully organize and secure rights; and

WHEREAS, The work of César Chávez was informed by his devout Catholic faith, and he favored images of Our Lady of Guadalupe at marches and demonstrations; and

WHEREAS, In 1975, Chávez and Huerta and the UFW's efforts resulted in the California "Agricultural Labor Relations Act", a groundbreaking law protecting the right of farm workers to unionize; and

WHEREAS, Chávez tirelessly devoted himself to making people aware of the struggles of farm workers and their need for better pay and safer working conditions; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez, Dolores Huerta, and the UFW achieved the following:

- The first collective bargaining agreement between farm workers and growers in the continental United States;
- The first union contracts requiring rest periods, clean drinking water, hand washing facilities, and clothing protective against pesticide exposure;
- The first ban on pesticide spraying while workers were in the fields and the first ban on DDT and other dangerous pesticides;
- The first and only performing pension plan for retired farm workers;
- The first union contracts regulating safety and sanitary conditions in farm labor camps and banning discrimination in employment and sexual harassment of female workers;
- Abolition of the use of "*el cortito*", the infamous short-handled hoe that disabled generations of farm workers; and
- Extension of state coverage for unemployment, disability, and workers' compensation to farm workers; and

WHEREAS, On April 23, 1993, César Chávez died peacefully in his sleep in San Luis, Arizona; and

WHEREAS, In 1994, President Bill Clinton posthumously awarded César Chávez the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez influenced and inspired millions of Americans to seek social justice and civil rights for the poor and disenfranchised in our society; and

WHEREAS, It is important to continue César Chávez and Dolores Huerta's legacies of advocating for the rights of agricultural workers, including efforts currently underway; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Seventy-fifth General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

That we, the members of the House of Representatives, honor March 31, 2025, as "César Chávez Day" in recognition of both César Chávez and Dolores Huerta, two inspiring leaders who have improved the working conditions, safety, and dignity of so many.

Be It Further Resolved, That copies of this Resolution be sent to former State Senator Rob Hernandez, who, with State Representative Frana Mace, was the prime sponsor on Senate Joint Resolution 99-043, "Recognizing César Chávez"; former State Representative Fran Coleman; former State Senator Polly Baca; former State Senator Abel Tapia; each member of Colorado's congressional delegation; Dolores Huerta of the Dolores Huerta Foundation; the César Chávez Peace and Justice Committee of Denver, c/o Dr. Ramón Del Castillo, co-founder of the committee and retired professor and chair of the Chicana and Chicano Studies Department at Metropolitan State University of Denver; Woodbury Library in Denver; the members of the Pueblo City Council; César Chávez Academy in Pueblo; Denver Mayor Mike Johnston; and the members of the Denver City Council.

Vanessa Reilly
CHIEF CLERK OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES

Julie McCluskie
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES