

**First Regular Session
Seventy-first General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. R17-1075.01 Ashley Athey x2291

HJR17-1021

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 17-1021

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

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

4 WHEREAS, During the Great Depression, César Chávez's father
5 lost his small farming business, and they, like many other families,
6 became migrant workers. They joined some 30,000 workers who
7 followed the crops from Arizona into southern California; and

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

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

1 WHEREAS, In 1944, at the age of 17, César Chávez joined the
2 Navy and served his country; and

3 WHEREAS, After experiencing years of discrimination and unfair
4 working conditions, César Chávez dedicated his life to improving the
5 plight of farm workers through struggle, sacrifice, and self-denial; and

6 WHEREAS, César Chávez formed his own organization in 1962,
7 the National Farm Workers Association, which later became the United
8 Farm Workers of America (UFW), to help farm workers like himself win
9 equal rights and fair treatment; and

10 WHEREAS, When recognizing César Chávez, it is only right to
11 recognize the accomplishments of UFW cofounder Dolores Huerta, for
12 her work on behalf of farm workers; and

13 WHEREAS, Dolores Huerta brought forward a unique voice on
14 behalf of women to ensure all workers had fair representation; and

15 WHEREAS, In 1965, César Chávez led a strike of California
16 grape pickers to demand higher wages and urged all Americans to boycott
17 table grapes as a show of support; and

18 WHEREAS, César Chávez believed in the principles of
19 nonviolence practiced by Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King,
20 Jr., and used tactics such as boycotts, marches, strikes, and fasts to lead
21 a successful five-year boycott that gained millions of supporters and new
22 members for farm labor unions across the United States; and

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

26 WHEREAS, During a fast in 1972, César Chávez and Dolores
27 Huerta coined the phrase "Sí, se puede", which in English means "Yes,
28 it can be done", reflecting their conviction that failure happens only by
29 giving up on nonviolent tactics; and

30 WHEREAS, The work of César Chávez was informed by his
31 devout Catholic faith, and he traditionally included images of Our Lady
32 of Guadalupe at marches and demonstrations and led supporters in

1 praying the rosary; and

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

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

8 WHEREAS, César Chávez and the organization he cofounded
9 with Dolores Huerta, the UFW, achieved the following:

10 ! The first collective bargaining agreement between farm
11 workers and growers in the continental United States; and

12 ! The first union contracts requiring rest periods, clean
13 drinking water, hand washing facilities, and protective
14 clothing against pesticide exposure; and

15 ! The first ban on pesticide spraying while workers were in
16 the fields and the first ban on DDT and other dangerous
17 pesticides; and

18 ! The first and only performing pension plan for retired farm
19 workers; and

20 ! The first union contracts regulating safety and sanitary
21 conditions in farm labor camps and banning discrimination
22 in employment and sexual harassment of female workers;
23 and

24 ! Abolition of the use of the infamous short-handled hoe that
25 crippled generations of farm workers; and

26 ! Extension of state coverage under unemployment,
27 disability, and workers' compensation to farm workers; and

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

30 WHEREAS, In 1994, President Bill Clinton posthumously

1 awarded César Chávez the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest
2 civilian honor in the United States; and

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

6 *Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Seventy-first*
7 *General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the Senate concurring herein:*

8 That we, the members of the General Assembly, honor a man and
9 woman who devoted their lives to improving the working conditions,
10 safety, and dignity of so many on the day that the entire state observes as
11 "César Chávez Day", March 31, 2017, while recognizing Dolores Huerta.

12 *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent
13 to State Senator Rob Hernandez, who, with State Representative Frana
14 Mace, was the prime sponsor on Senate Joint Resolution 99-043,
15 "Recognizing César Chávez"; State Representative Fran Coleman; State
16 Representative Val Vigil; State Senator Polly Baca; State Senator Abel
17 Tapia; each member of Colorado's congressional delegation; Dolores
18 Huerta of the Dolores Huerta Foundation; the César Chávez Peace and
19 Justice Committee, c/o Dr. Ramón Del Castillo, cofounder of the
20 committee and Professor and Chair of the Chicana and Chicano Studies
21 Department at Metropolitan State University of Denver; Woodbury
22 Library in Denver; the members of the Pueblo City Council; César
23 Chávez Academy in Pueblo; Denver Mayor Michael Hancock; City
24 Councilwoman Ramona Martinez; and the members of the Denver City
25 Council, in recognition of their efforts to promote "César Chávez Day".