

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 3

Expressing the sense of the Congress regarding a Federal holiday to commemorate the birthday of Cesar E. Chavez.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 3, 2001

Mr. FILNER submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Government Reform

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress regarding a Federal holiday to commemorate the birthday of Cesar E. Chavez.

Whereas César E. Chávez was born March 31, 1927, on a small farm near Yuma, Arizona, and died on April 23, 1993;

Whereas the State of California and the city of San Diego, California, has each established a holiday to recognize the birthday of César E. Chavez;

Whereas numerous holidays, schools, parks, libraries, and other structures and events have been named after César E. Chavez, internationally and in Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, and Texas, with many more planned;

Whereas César E. Chávez was a recipient of the Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Prize during his lifetime and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Clinton on August 8, 1994;

Whereas as the grandson of a Mexican immigrant and settler, he grew up working with migrant farm workers, himself picking grapes, melons, beans, and other staple crops at low wages and for long hours, during which time he developed a strong work ethic and respect for the farm workers his father called “the children of God”;

Whereas at the age of 18, César E. Chávez entered the United States Navy and served his country with distinction for 2 years;

Whereas as early as 1949, César E. Chávez committed himself to organizing farm workers to campaign for safe and fair working conditions, reasonable wages, decent housing, and the outlawing of child labor;

Whereas in 1962, César E. Chávez founded the National Farm Workers Association, predecessor of the United Farm Workers of America, which brought hope to farm workers that they might one day realize the basic protections and workers’ rights to which all Americans aspire;

Whereas through his commitment to nonviolence, César E. Chavez brought dignity and respect to the farm workers who organized themselves and became an inspiration and a resource to other Americans and people engaged in human rights struggles throughout the world;

Whereas César E. Chávez was an advocate for nonviolence at a time when violence penetrated every level of our society;

Whereas César E. Chávez and his family also dedicated themselves to the education of farm workers’ children through

migrant schools, many of whom graduated and worked as teachers, doctors, nurses, and in other professional occupations;

Whereas the legacy of César E. Chávez includes healthy working conditions that yield uncontaminated food for America's tables and the enforcement of employer sanctions for those who hire illegal immigrants;

Whereas César E. Chávez's influence extends far beyond agriculture and provides inspiration for those working to better human rights through his example of organizing voter registration drives in urban and farm areas, initiating complaints against mistreatment by police and welfare officials, and empowering everyday workers to seek advancement in education and politics; and

Whereas César E. Chávez lived alongside his campesino brothers and sisters in humble surroundings and upon his passing was laid to rest where he lived and worked for 23 years on the grounds of the headquarters of the United Farm Workers of America, known as Nuestra Señora de La Paz (Our Lady of Peace), located in the Tehachapi Mountains at Keene, California: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
 2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of the Congress that—

3 (1) a Federal holiday should be established to
 4 honor César E. Chávez for his tireless commitment
 5 to improve the plight of farm workers and the poor
 6 throughout the United States and for the inspiration
 7 his heroic efforts gave to so many Americans to

1 work nonviolently for justice in their communities;
2 and

3 (2) all Americans should commit themselves to
4 working for justice through nonviolence in their com-
5 munities and remind themselves of the work of the
6 people who put food on the tables of America.

○