

Second Regular Session  
Sixty-ninth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. R14-1030.01 Effie Ameen x2044

SJR14-024

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 14-024

101 CONCERNING RECOGNITION OF "CÉSAR CHÁVEZ DAY".

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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, In the 1930s, during the Great Depression, like so  
5 many others, César Chávez's father lost his small farming business, and  
6 the family became migrant workers and 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 in World War II; 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, In 1965, César Chávez led a strike of California  
11 grape pickers to demand higher wages and urged all Americans to boycott  
12 table grapes as a show of support; and

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

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

21           WHEREAS, During a fast in 1972, César Chávez coined the  
22 phrase "Sí, se puede", which in English means "Yes, it can be done",  
23 reflecting his conviction that failure happens only by giving up on  
24 nonviolent tactics; and

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

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

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

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

3           !       The first union contracts requiring rest periods, clean  
4 drinking water, hand washing facilities, and protective  
5 clothing against pesticide exposure; and

6           !       The first ban on pesticide spraying while workers were in  
7 the fields and the first ban on DDT and other dangerous  
8 pesticides; and

9           !       The first and only performing pension plan for retired farm  
10 workers; and

11          !       The first union contracts regulating safety and sanitary  
12 conditions in farm labor camps and banning discrimination  
13 in employment and sexual harassment of female workers;  
14 and

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

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

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

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

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

27               *Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Sixty-ninth General Assembly*  
28 *of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:*

29               That we, the members of the General Assembly, honor a man who  
30 devoted his life to improving the working conditions, safety, and dignity  
31 of so many on the day that the entire state observes as "César Chávez

1 Day", March 31, 2014.

2 *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent  
3 to former State Representative Frana Mace; former State Representative  
4 Fran Coleman; former State Senator Rob Hernandez; former State  
5 Senator Abel Tapia; each member of Colorado's congressional delegation;  
6 Dolores Huerta of the Dolores Huerta Foundation; Dr. Ramón Del  
7 Castillo, cofounder of the César Chávez Peace and Justice Committee and  
8 Professor and Chair of the Chicana and Chicano Studies Department at  
9 Metropolitan State University of Denver; Woodbury Library in Denver;  
10 the members of the Pueblo City Council; Cesar Chavez Academy in  
11 Pueblo; Denver Mayor Michael Hancock; and the members of the Denver  
12 City Council, in recognition of their efforts to promote "César Chávez  
13 Day".