

By: Chavez

H.C.R. No. 158

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Cesar Chavez's ideal of nonviolent activism as shown  
2 through his lifetime commitment to the rights of U.S. farmworkers  
3 has led to a national regard for him as a great leader and  
4 motivator; his contributions to the nation's attitude toward social  
5 justice make him a role model for many; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Chavez's perseverance as a farmworker during  
7 his youth, his patriotism during his period of active duty in the  
8 U.S. Navy, and his service to underrepresented communities through  
9 the organization of voting drives beginning in the 1950s all  
10 contributed to a sensitive social consciousness that manifested  
11 itself in his unending efforts for the rights of others; and

12 WHEREAS, Mr. Chavez acted out his beliefs in his founding of  
13 the National Farm Workers Association in 1962, which merged with  
14 the AFL-CIO's Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee in 1966 to  
15 form the United Farm Workers of America, a unified organization  
16 that came to be renowned for its success in gaining recognition for  
17 workers' rights; and

18 WHEREAS, The United Farm Workers of America, under the  
19 leadership of Mr. Chavez, brought together the diverse interests of  
20 labor unions, churches, and student, minority, and consumer groups  
21 to focus on mobilization around common issues of equality and  
22 justice; the organization became particularly well-known for its  
23 participation in the California grape boycott of the 1960s and  
24 1970s, a watershed event that gained the support of more than 17

1 million Americans and contributed to the establishment of the  
2 movement still known today as "La Causa"; and

3 WHEREAS, The death of Cesar Chavez on April 23, 1993, was a  
4 profound loss to the communities he tirelessly served and to an  
5 entire nation that participated in his boycotts, knew about his  
6 peaceful protests for farmworkers' rights, and both saw his image  
7 and heard his name countless times; in a tribute indicative of the  
8 impact he made on American society, more than 50,000 people mourned  
9 him at his funeral in California; and

10 WHEREAS, Since his death, Mr. Chavez's memory has been  
11 honored with the naming of numerous schools, streets, scholarships,  
12 monuments, buildings, and parks for him; a number of U.S. cities  
13 have annual celebrations in honor of Mr. Chavez, and several  
14 states, including Texas, have declared his birthday, March 31, a  
15 state holiday; in 1994, Mr. Chavez was awarded the nation's highest  
16 civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and on April 23,  
17 2003, he will be further memorialized for his tireless work for  
18 justice and equality with the unveiling of the Cesar Chavez postage  
19 stamp; and

20 WHEREAS, This year marks the 10th anniversary of the civil  
21 rights and farm labor leader's passing, and it is indeed fitting  
22 that Mr. Chavez receive formal recognition on a national level; his  
23 humanitarian pursuits have earned him the highest respect from an  
24 impressive diversity of groups and interests; as a leader, he  
25 provides an outstanding example of commitment to and the exercise  
26 of one's beliefs; as a Latino, he provides an admirable example to  
27 the nation's fastest-growing demographic group; public and private

1 school students of all ages from all over the state will celebrate  
2 March 31 in honor of Cesar Chavez, and schools should continue to  
3 educate our children about the life and accomplishments of this  
4 great man; now, therefore, be it

5         RESOLVED, That the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas  
6 hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to enact  
7 legislation designating March 31 as a national holiday honoring  
8 Cesar Chavez; and, be it further

9         RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official  
10 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to  
11 the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the  
12 senate of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the  
13 Texas delegation to the congress with the request that this  
14 resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a  
15 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.