

By: Chavez

H.R. No. 600

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Dolores Huerta, who founded with Cesar Chávez the
2 United Farm Workers (UFW) union, has been a driving force in the
3 American labor movement for four decades; and

4 WHEREAS, Born in a small New Mexican mining town, Ms. Huerta
5 grew up in Stockton, California, a farmworker community in the San
6 Joaquin Valley; she received a teaching degree from Delta Community
7 College and began a career in elementary education, but the
8 impoverished plight of her students stirred the social conscience
9 bred into her by a caring, activist mother; in 1955 she helped to
10 found the Stockton chapter of the Community Service Organization
11 (CSO), a grassroots group that had originated in the barrios of Los
12 Angeles; and

13 WHEREAS, Ms. Huerta was soon working for the CSO full time,
14 and in 1960 she further expanded the scope of her activities by
15 founding the Agricultural Workers Association; possessing an
16 astute political sense, she began lobbying the California
17 legislature, and from 1960 to 1962 she played an instrumental role
18 in the passage of 15 bills, among them legislation that enabled
19 farmworkers to receive disability and unemployment insurance,
20 public assistance, and retirement benefits; and

21 WHEREAS, In 1962, determined to found a union for
22 farmworkers, who had no group to represent them, Dolores Huerta and
23 Cesar Chávez created the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA);
24 the forerunner of the UFW, this group gained prominence in 1965 when

1 it came to the support of workers striking against California grape
2 growers; Ms. Huerta directed a nationwide grape boycott, which
3 ultimately led to the first collective bargaining agreement in the
4 United States between farmworkers and an agricultural corporation;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, The leading contract negotiator for the UFW, Ms.
7 Huerta was responsible, together with Mr. Chávez, for establishing
8 the first medical plan, the first pension plan, and the first credit
9 union for farmworkers; the two also created the National Farm
10 Workers Service Center, which builds affordable housing for
11 low-income workers and which operates a number of Spanish-language
12 radio stations; and

13 WHEREAS, In addition to organizing for the UFW, Ms. Huerta
14 has continued to work for its causes through the years; her efforts
15 have contributed to the passage of major legislation in California
16 bearing on the right of workers to organize and on mediation to
17 resolve strikes, as well as the federal Immigration Act of 1985,
18 which allowed many undocumented workers to apply for legal status;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Ms. Huerta served as secretary-treasurer of the UFW,
21 vice president of the Coalition for Labor Union Women, and vice
22 president of the California AFL-CIO; moreover, she has shared her
23 expertise as a member of several state and federal commissions and
24 as a board member of various national organizations promoting
25 democracy and civic engagement; and

26 WHEREAS, Her numerous accolades include the Outstanding
27 Labor Leader Award of the California State Senate, induction into

1 the National Women's Hall of Fame, tribute from the American Civil
2 Liberties Union, and three honorary doctorates; and

3 WHEREAS, One of this country's preeminent labor leaders,
4 Dolores Huerta continues to render extraordinary service in behalf
5 of this nation's working men and women, and it is indeed fitting
6 that she be recognized for her enormous contributions to the
7 advancement of social and economic justice; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 78th Texas
9 Legislature hereby honor Dolores Huerta for her exceptional
10 achievements as a labor advocate and commend her for her unwavering
11 commitment to securing a brighter future for America's farmworkers
12 and their families; and, be it further

13 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
14 prepared for Ms. Huerta as an expression of high regard by the Texas
15 House of Representatives.