

By: McClendon

H.R. No. 127

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Linda Chavez-Thompson, executive vice president  
2 emerita of the AFL-CIO, has dedicated herself to America's workers  
3 for more than 40 years, forging new pathways for the labor movement;  
4 and

5           WHEREAS, A second-generation American of Mexican descent,  
6 Ms. Chavez-Thompson was born and raised in the Lubbock area; she  
7 began laboring long hours in the fields with her father at the age  
8 of 10; her formal education ended after the ninth grade, when family  
9 circumstances forced her to work full-time picking cotton and  
10 cleaning houses; she never ceased to study, however, and her  
11 extraordinary career began at 24, when a family friend who could not  
12 speak Spanish hired her as his bilingual secretary at the local  
13 chapter of the Laborers International Union; her skill and keen  
14 intelligence led to a job overseeing tornado relief efforts for the  
15 AFL-CIO in 1971, and later that year she was hired by the American  
16 Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; and

17           WHEREAS, Ms. Chavez-Thompson rose through the ranks as an  
18 organizer and went on to serve with great distinction as an  
19 international vice president of the AFSCME; she also served as  
20 national vice president of the AFL-CIO Labor Council for Latin  
21 American Advancement; in 1993, she was elected as a vice president  
22 of the executive council of the national AFL-CIO, and two years  
23 later she was elected executive vice president of the federation,  
24 becoming the first person of color to hold one of its three highest

1 offices; and

2           WHEREAS, During her 12 years as the highest ranking woman in  
3 organized labor, Ms. Chavez-Thompson helped reinvigorate the  
4 movement by using innovative methods to connect with new  
5 constituencies, including women, minorities, and immigrants;  
6 demonstrating profound compassion for those facing discrimination  
7 and exploitation, she focused on civil rights, human rights, and  
8 community issues and built valuable coalitions with outside  
9 organizations and religious groups; her endeavors have been  
10 recognized with such accolades as the 2008 Farmworker Justice  
11 Award, a Mother Jones Award from the Coalition of Labor Union Women,  
12 and the 2003 Latina of the Year Award from *CATALINA* magazine and  
13 *Hispanas Organized for Political Equality*; and

14           WHEREAS, This dynamic Texan retired to San Antonio in  
15 September 2007 to spend more time with her children and  
16 grandchildren, but she remains active as executive vice president  
17 emerita, as chair of the AFL-CIO Immigration Committee, and as  
18 president of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas; in  
19 2008, she led an AFL-CIO fact-finding delegation to Colombia and  
20 aided the federation's campaign to protect the voting rights of  
21 Hispanic citizens; moreover, she serves as a vice chair of the  
22 Democratic National Committee and as the labor representative to  
23 the Public Board of Trustees of the San Antonio Transit Authority;  
24 and

25           WHEREAS, For more than four decades, Linda Chavez-Thompson  
26 has been a bold and effective champion of American workers; her  
27 efforts to combat social and economic injustice have helped

1 countless people realize their dreams of a better life; now,  
2 therefore, be it

3         RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 81st Texas  
4 Legislature hereby commend Linda Chavez-Thompson for her  
5 remarkable contributions to workers' issues and civil and human  
6 rights and extend to her sincere best wishes for continued success;  
7 and, be it further

8         RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be  
9 prepared for Ms. Chavez-Thompson as an expression of high regard by  
10 the Texas House of Representatives.