

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Americans across the country will pause on March 31,  
2 2012, Cesar Chavez Day, to pay tribute to the inspiring life and  
3 achievements of the founder and longtime leader of the United Farm  
4 Workers of America (UFW), AFL-CIO, on the anniversary of his birth;  
5 and

6           WHEREAS, Born in 1927 near Yuma, Arizona, and later raised in  
7 California, Cesar Estrada Chavez spent much of his youth as a  
8 migrant laborer; as a Latino and a farmworker, he learned firsthand  
9 about the indignities of second-class citizenship and the unhealthy  
10 working and living conditions endured by those who tended the  
11 fields; and

12           WHEREAS, After serving in the U.S. Navy from 1944 to 1946,  
13 Cesar Chavez returned to California, and in 1948 he married Helen  
14 Fabela; four years later he became a community organizer for the  
15 Community Service Organization (CSO), a Latino civil rights group  
16 that focused most of its work in urban areas, and by the late 1950s  
17 he had become its national director; and

18           WHEREAS, When in 1962 the CSO declined to organize California  
19 farmworkers, Mr. Chavez and his colleague Dolores Huerta left the  
20 organization to found the National Farm Workers Association, a  
21 forerunner of the UFW; their fledgling union gained national  
22 prominence just three years later when it came to the support of  
23 workers who were striking against California's grape growers; in  
24 addition to assuming leadership of the strike, Mr. Chavez launched

1 a successful nationwide consumers' boycott of nonunion grapes; and

2       WHEREAS, By the end of the five-year-long strike, the UFW had  
3 organized all of the California table-grape industry and negotiated  
4 the first collective bargaining agreements between American  
5 farmworkers and corporations; in 1975 Cesar Chavez and the UFW  
6 further succeeded in securing the passage of California's  
7 Agricultural Labor Relations Act, the first law in U.S. history  
8 granting farmworkers the right to unionize and bargain  
9 collectively; numerous other gains achieved under his leadership  
10 included the establishment of a farmworkers' medical plan, pension  
11 plan, and credit union, as well as the National Farm Workers Service  
12 Center, Inc., whose projects include the development of affordable  
13 housing, health clinics, cooperatives, and a retirement home; and

14       WHEREAS, Over the course of his life, Cesar Chavez sought to  
15 advance La Causa, the movement, through nonviolent means--through  
16 strikes, pickets, and boycotts; on several occasions he also  
17 undertook lengthy fasts to draw public attention to the  
18 farmworkers' struggle; and

19       WHEREAS, Mr. Chavez continued to lead the UFW until his death  
20 on April 23, 1993; more than 50,000 people from throughout the  
21 nation gathered to mourn him at his funeral, indicative of the  
22 far-reaching impact he had made on American society; and

23       WHEREAS, Since that time, numerous schools, streets,  
24 scholarships, monuments, buildings, and parks have been named in  
25 his memory, a number of U.S. cities have initiated annual  
26 celebrations in tribute to his life, and several states, including  
27 Texas, have declared his birthday, March 31, a state holiday; in

1 1994 Mr. Chavez was posthumously awarded the nation's highest  
2 honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom; and

3 WHEREAS, Cesar Chavez chose to devote his life to the pursuit  
4 of social and economic justice through nonviolent means, and his  
5 courage and steadfastness in this great work brought improved  
6 health, greater security, and hope for a brighter future to  
7 countless people; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 82nd Texas  
9 Legislature hereby honor the life of Cesar Chavez and join the  
10 citizens of the Lone Star State in commemorating the 85th  
11 anniversary of his birth on March 31, 2012.

Alonzo

H.R. No. 27

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.R. No. 27 was unanimously adopted by a rising vote of the House on February 24, 2011.

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Chief Clerk of the House