

CITY COUNCIL
CHRIS HOLDEN
COUNCILMEMBER
DISTRICT 3
April 28, 2003

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Councilmember Chris Holden

RE: CONSIDERATION OF THE DESIGNATION OF CESAR CHAVEZ DAY AS A CITY HOLIDAY OR DAY OF CELEBRATION

I recommend that the City Council declare March 31 as a Day of Celebration in Pasadena in honor of Cesar Chavez, and ask that the City Council direct staff to begin meeting with the City's unions, asking them to join the City Council in this celebration by converting an existing floating holiday to Cesar Chavez Day.

In 1962, Cesar Chavez founded the National Farm Workers Association, which later became the United Farm Workers AFL-CIO, the first successful farmworkers' union in the United States. Under Mr. Chavez' leadership, the UFW was the first organization to win collective bargaining rights for farm workers, and at its peak in the 1980's, the UFW's labor agreements covered approximately 80,000 workers in California, Arizona and Florida. Mr. Chavez rallied millions of supporters to farmworker causes, and forged a national coalition of unions, religious groups, students, minorities, and consumers that together pursued issues of social justice.

The late Senator Robert Kennedy called Cesar Chavez, "One of the heroic figures of our time." As a testimony to his lifelong contributions to humanity, in 1994, Mr. Chavez was posthumously awarded the highest civilian award from the United States, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 2000, SB 984 was signed by Governor Gray Davis, recognizing the accomplishments of Cesar Chavez and establishing a paid holiday for state employees and participating public schools.

I recommend that the City of Pasadena join the State of California in celebrating Mr. Chavez as one of the most important civil rights leaders in our nation's history. By converting an existing floating holiday into an observed holiday, the City will not incur additional direct costs.

Respectfully submitted,

CHRIS HOLDEN
Councilmember

**CITY OF PASADENA
2004 EXISTING HOLIDAYS FOR CITY EMPLOYEES**

January 1	New Year's Day
January 19	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
February 12	Lincoln's Birthday
February 16	Washington's Birthday (Observed)
May 31	Memorial Day
July 5	Independence Day (Observed)
September 6	Labor Day
November 12	Veteran's Day
November 25	Thanksgiving Day
November 26	Day after Thanksgiving
December 24	Christmas (Observed)
Floating Holiday	(Replaced Admissions Day)

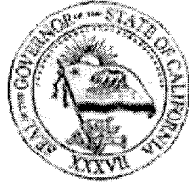
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Proclamation

Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

STATE OF CALIFORNIA



PROCLAMATION
by the
Governor of the State of California

WHEREAS, on March 31, 1927, Cesar Estrada Chavez was born on a small ranch near Yuma, Arizona; and

WHEREAS, when severe drought forced the Chavez family to give up their ranch in 1937, they began picking crops on California farms; and

WHEREAS, after serving our nation in WWII, Cesar Chavez returned to farm labor in California and began advocating for workers' rights; and

WHEREAS, in 1962, Cesar Chavez founded the National Farm Workers Association, which later became the United Farm Workers of America (UFW), AFL-CIO, the first successful farmworkers' union in United States history; and

WHEREAS, under Cesar Chavez's tireless leadership, the UFW was the first to win collective bargaining for farmworkers; and

WHEREAS, at its peak in the 1980's, the UFW's collective bargaining agreements covered approximately 80,000 workers in California, Arizona and Florida; and

WHEREAS, Cesar Chavez led a successful five-year grape-pickers' strike that rallied millions of supporters to the UFW and forged a national coalition of unions, church groups, students, minorities and consumers; and

WHEREAS, on April 23, 1993, Cesar Chavez passed away, leaving behind an enduring legacy of service and leadership; and

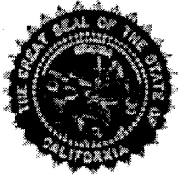
WHEREAS, Cesar Chavez's influence has made a lasting impact on farm labor issues and inspired millions of Latinos to achieve educational and political success; and

WHEREAS, on March 31, 2003, individuals and organizations throughout California will celebrate Cesar Chavez's life and work by participating in community service projects;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GRAY DAVIS, Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim March 31, 2003 as "Cesar Chavez Day of Service and Learning."

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this the twenty-fourth day of March 2003.

/s/ Gray Davis



Governor of California

Proclamations are posted as soon as possible but may not always be available on the day they are issued.

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Press Release



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

L00:072
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 18, 2000

GOVERNOR DAVIS SIGNS LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH HOLIDAY IN RECOGNITION OF CESAR CHAVEZ

Hundreds Attend Rally for Law that Honors Life and Work of Latino Leader

LOS ANGELES—At a bill signing ceremony and rally at the El Pueblo de Los Angeles Plaza, Governor Gray Davis today honored legendary Latino leader Cesar Chavez by signing a bill to establish Cesar Chavez Day in California.

"With an unconquerable spirit, an undeniable cause, and an unwavering belief in the power of people, Cesar Chavez led a labor movement which set into motion such powerful, sweeping changes that the impact is still being felt today," Governor Davis said. "He taught thousands of men and women how to sow the seeds of justice along with grapes and strawberries, and he taught us all how injustice anywhere affects us all everywhere."

At the rally, attended by Cesar Chavez's son, Paul Chavez, and Cesar Chavez's successor and current United Farm Workers president, Arturo Rodriguez, Governor Davis signed **SB 984 by Senator Richard Polanco (D-Los Angeles)**. The bill recognizes the accomplishments of Cesar Chavez by establishing the first paid state holiday in the nation to honor the legendary farm labor leader.

In addition to the new March 31st paid holiday for state workers and participating public schools, the bill also encourages students to engage in community service activities through AmeriCorps and the California Conservation Corps, and requires the development of school curriculum so children will learn about Chavez's lessons of non-violence, self-sacrifice and social justice.

"If Cesar Chavez were with us now, I believe he would celebrate our gains, but then he would summon us on," Governor Davis continued. "He would turn us to the hard work that is still undone, and he would point to our historic obligation to do more, for our workers, for our farmworkers, for our children and for all Californians."

An agricultural laborer from an early age, Cesar Chavez began a crusade against the harsh physical and social treatment of farmworkers. Together with Dolores Huerta, he established the United Farm Workers Organization and helped to organize a labor strike against growers in order to obtain union contracts and improve working conditions for agricultural laborers. These and other similar activities inspired Chicano activism throughout the 1960's and 70's, which helped to fuel the Latino civil rights movement. Today, Cesar Chavez is recognized as one of the most important labor and civil rights leaders in our nation's history.

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BILL NUMBER: SCR 26 ENROLLED
BILL TEXT

PASSED THE ASSEMBLY MAY 24, 2001
PASSED THE SENATE MARCH 29, 2001

INTRODUCED BY Senator Polanco

MARCH 26, 2001

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 26--Relative to Cesar Chavez Day.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 26, Polanco. Cesar Chavez Day.

This measure would recognize March 31 as the anniversary of the birth of Cesar Chavez and call upon all Californians to participate in appropriate observances to remember Cesar Chavez as a symbol of hope and justice to all citizens.

WHEREAS, On March 31, 1927, a true hero named Cesar Estrada Chavez was born in Yuma, Arizona, to Librado and Juana Chavez and became the second eldest in a family of five children. Cesar Chavez lived his life dedicated to improving the plight of farmworkers through struggle, sacrifice, and abnegation. He founded and led the first successful farmworkers' union in United States history. He stood for dignity and justice for farmworkers. Today, he remains a symbol of hope to all Californians who find hope and peace in justice; and

WHEREAS, In the 1930's, during the Great Depression, Cesar Chavez' father lost his small farming business and the family went broke. The family became migrant workers and joined some 30,000 workers who followed the crops from Arizona into southern California, then up the length of the Central Valley and back again picking everything from peas to cotton. They lived in tents and other makeshift housing that often lacked a bathroom, electricity, or running water. Schooling for Cesar Chavez was irregular and haphazard. He attended some 30 different schools, often encountered discrimination, and was punished for speaking Spanish; and

WHEREAS, After graduation from the eight grade, Cesar Chavez was forced to quit school and take to the fields in order to help support his family. In 1944, at the age of 17, Cesar Chavez joined the Navy and served in World War II. After he completed his tour of duty, Cesar Chavez returned to California and married Helen Fabela, a woman who shared his dedication to the cause of the farmworker. They lived in San Jose in a tough Mexican neighborhood called "sal si puedes" which translated to "get out if you can," and together raised eight children; and

WHEREAS, As a farmworker, Cesar Chavez experienced firsthand the injustice of working long hours with little pay. Instilled with a sense of justice passed down from his mother, Cesar Chavez made a decision to speak up and fight for a change. He took part in his first strike in protest of low wages and poor working conditions for farmworkers. Although initially unsuccessful, his participation in that first strike was to mark the beginning of a long career in which he fought for improved working and living conditions for

farmworkers; and

WHEREAS, In 1952, Cesar Chavez met Fred Ross who was with a group called the Community Services Organization (CSO). Struck by Cesar Chavez' engaging personality and leadership qualities, Fred Ross tapped Cesar Chavez to head voter registration efforts where he successfully registered 4,000 voters. The following year Chavez led organization efforts to establish CSO offices in every major barrio. He eventually spent 10 years with CSO and became general director in 1958. During this time, services were expanded to include citizenship classes, helping members secure driver's licenses, assistance in filling out applications for aid, and securing legal counsel; and

WHEREAS, In 1962, Cesar Chavez resigned his position with the CSO to embark on a bold new undertaking to form a farmworkers' union. He was joined by the great Dolores Huerta and together they became the architects of the National Farm Worker's Union, the forerunner to the present United Farm Workers (UFW); and

WHEREAS, In 1965, Cesar Chavez led a strike of California grape pickers to demand higher wages, and urged all Americans to boycott table grapes as a show of support. The strike included a 340-mile march from Delano to Sacramento in 1966 in which thousands of farmworkers and supporters marched in solidarity. The farmworkers and supporters carried banners with the black eagle with the words "HUELGA" (strike) and "VIVA LA CAUSA" (long live our cause); and

WHEREAS, Cesar Chavez preached nonviolence to the strikers even as they were physically abused by many of those opposed to the grape boycott. In 1968, Cesar Chavez began a fast, in the model of Mahatma Gandhi, to call attention to the migrant workers' cause. Although his dramatic act did little to solve the immediate problem, it increased public awareness of the conditions under which farmworkers labored. In 1973, the UFW organized a strike for higher wages from lettuce growers, and after many battles an agreement was finally reached in 1977 that gave the UFW the sole right to organize farmworkers; and

WHEREAS, During the 1980's, Cesar Chavez led the effort to call attention to the health problems of farmworkers caused by the use of certain pesticides on crops; and

WHEREAS, On April 23, 1993, Cesar Estrada Chavez died peacefully in his sleep in San Luis, Arizona. During Cesar Chavez' funeral, Cardinal Roger M. Mahoney, who celebrated the funeral mass, called Cesar Chavez "a special prophet for the world's farm workers"; and

WHEREAS, Many declared that the UFW would die without him, but on Cesar Chavez' birthday, March 31, 1994, under the leadership of his son-in-law Arturo Rodriguez, the UFW marched 343 miles from Delano to Sacramento, echoing Cesar Chavez' historic 1966 march, and demonstrated that the UFW still worked for farmworkers; and

WHEREAS, In 1990, Mexican President Salinas de Gortari awarded Cesar Chavez, the "El Aquila Azteca" (the Aztec Eagle), Mexico's highest award presented to people of Mexican heritage who have made major contributions outside of Mexico. He also became the second Mexican American to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States, which was presented posthumously to Helen Chavez and her children on August 8, 1994, by President Clinton; and

WHEREAS, In 1994, Cesar Chavez' family and the officers of the UFW created the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation to inspire current and future generations by promoting the ideals of Cesar Chavez' life, work, and vision. Communities throughout California and the United States have honored Cesar Chavez by naming parks, children's centers, streets, and other public works after the leader; and

WHEREAS, Cesar Chavez led by example, giving of himself so that he might help others. His relentless pursuit of the belief that the American dream should be available to all Americans, regardless of race or origin of birth, stands as a monument to our free society. His life and work is not only an inspiration to Latinos, but to working Americans of all nationalities. His legacy lives on in the improved working and living conditions of hundred of thousands of Californians and their families; and

WHEREAS, In the year 2000, the Legislature enacted Senate Bill 984 (Chapter 213 of the Statutes of 2000) to create an annual state holiday on Cesar Chavez' birthday, March 31; this holiday provides all Californians the opportunity to learn from Cesar Chavez' life and provides school children the opportunity to learn through community service; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature hereby recognizes March 31 as the anniversary of the birth of Cesar Chavez, and calls upon all Californians to participate in appropriate observances to remember Cesar Chavez as a symbol of hope and justice to all citizens; and be it further.

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASADENA
DECLARING MARCH 31 AS A CITY HOLIDAY AND A DAY OF CELEBRATION
IN HONOR OF THE BIRTH OF CESAR CHAVEZ

WHEREAS, Cesar Chavez, founder of the United Farmworkers of America, was one of the heroic figures of the 20th century, leading a five-year boycott of grapes, which led to the first union contracts for farm workers and the passage of California's Agricultural Labor Relations Act; and,

WHEREAS, many lessons can be learned from the life of Chavez, who like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was an adherent to nonviolent civil disobedience and led many strikes and boycotts for his cause; and,

WHEREAS, Chavez fought for the rights of immigrants, refusing to let the forces of agribusiness and racism scapegoat immigrant workers; and,

WHEREAS, Cesar Chavez was also an early environmentalist, warning the public of the devastating affects of pesticides on both farm workers and consumers; and

WHEREAS, Chavez is a beloved hero of the Mexican-American people, the labor movement and of all people who believe in justice; and,

WHEREAS, Cesar Chavez' March 31 birthday is a celebrated holiday in many states; and,

WHEREAS, the State of California has made the March 31 Cesar Chavez birthday a paid holiday and a day of service learning in the public schools,

NOW, THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED, that by the adoption of this resolution, the City of Pasadena hereby declares March 31 as day of celebration and asks that the City's unions join in the celebration of the life of Cesar Chavez by negotiating the exchange of the existing floating holiday for a fixed holiday on March 31 in honor of the birth of Cesar Chavez.

4/28/2003
7.A.2.

Adopted at the _____ meeting of the City Council on the
_____ day of _____, by the following vote:

AYES:

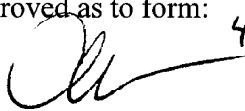
NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Jane L. Rodriguez, City Clerk

Approved as to form:

 4/24/03

Nicholas George Rodriguez
Assistant City Attorney