

2009-J4914

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 17th Anniversary of the death of Cesar E. Chavez, United Farm Workers Crusader

WHEREAS, Our nation is a symbol of democracy, peace, freedom and justice born out of the many men and women who have fought for and died to preserve it; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, it is the sense of this Legislative Body to join with the Mexican-American community in commemorating the 17th Anniversary of the death of Cesar E. Chavez, United Farm Workers Crusader; and

WHEREAS, The purpose of this commemoration is to observe the life and legacy which Cesar E. Chavez left behind, not only for the farm workers in the United States, but also to all those who believe in the non-violent struggle for civil rights and human dignity; and

WHEREAS, Cesar E. Chavez, of humble origins, and of Mexican parentage, was born in Yuma, Arizona, and was raised in the midst of the farms which many Mexicans tilled and worked for in bringing agricultural products to our tables; and

WHEREAS, Cesar Chavez was known for his keen leadership style, his non-violent stance, and his constant struggle to protect the rights of farm workers in California and throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, Between 1952 and 1962, Cesar Chavez worked for the Community Services Organization; when they refused to organize farm workers in 1962, he left and co-founded the United Farmers Union with Dolores Huerta; the bylaws were approved by the AFL-CIO in 1966; and

WHEREAS, Cesar Chavez represents, for many people, a humble role model and at the same time, demonstrates powerful convictions; his boycotts of grapes and other products raised consciousness about the life and struggles of farm workers, their needs and desires for a quality of life and

education; and

WHEREAS, Cesar Chavez's motto, "Si Se Puede" translated "Yes We Can," is a reflection of this commitment; and

WHEREAS, Like Mahatma Ghandi and Martin Luther King, Jr., Cesar Chavez believed in and carried out his struggle adhering to the principles of non-violence; his many acts of protest and, particularly, fasting served to unify the workers, alert America to the dangers of pesticides and stimulate the conscience and support of many in our Nation; and

WHEREAS, The family of the State of New York commemorates and honors Cesar Chavez as a champion of democracy and human rights; his legacy remains in the hearts and minds of many, but not nearly as much as in the workers and members of the United Farm Workers of America, which he founded and has, since his death on April 23, 1993, grown from 20,000 members to approximately 27,000 members; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting that New York, with a history rich in campaigns and battles for civil, labor and human rights, joins in honoring a great leader -- Cesar E. Chavez; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 17th Anniversary of the death of Cesar E. Chavez, United Farm Workers Crusader; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Cesar E. Chavez and to the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation.