SENATE RESOLUTION

8642

By Senators Saldaña, McCoy, Hobbs, Palumbo, Keiser, Takko, and Chase

WHEREAS, César Estrada Chávez was a world-changing American activist, renowned as a champion of Latino American civil rights and as an outspoken proponent of the American labor movement; and

WHEREAS, Chávez was born March 31, 1927, outside of Yuma, Arizona; and from the age of twelve, he labored in California as a farm worker; and

WHEREAS, In 1946, Chávez joined the United States Navy; he has since received military honors for his service and is the only Latino for whom a United States military ship is named; and

WHEREAS, Chávez contributed to this country not only through military service, but also by actively working to promote equality and freedom; and

WHEREAS, Inspired by his Catholic faith, Chávez embraced nonviolence in the manner of Martin Luther King, Jr.; worked hard to value the dignity of all types of occupations; and later, while working for a civil rights group, taught people to solve their problems collectively; and

WHEREAS, Chávez's nonviolent efforts, particularly between 1952 and 1976, brought the realities of the farm worker community to the nation's attention; and

WHEREAS, Chávez cofounded the National Farm Workers Association in 1962, which later became known as the United Farm Workers of America (UFW), and worked hard to enroll Hispanic members in the American labor movement; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez believed that farm workers deserved fair treatment; his work brought numerous improvements for union laborers, many of whom were underrepresented Latinos; and Chávez also made lasting contributions to consumer and laborer health and safety standards, including initiating the discontinued use of the short-handled hoe, a tool that often resulted in debilitating back pain for farm workers; and

WHEREAS, Chávez has become an iconic figure for organized labor and Latino communities; he, along with Dolores Huerta, popularized the phrase "*Sí, se puede*" or "Yes, one can," a saying that still holds relevance today; and

WHEREAS, During his lifetime and long after his death on April 23, 1993, Chávez inspired generations of Latino youth to invest in a life of service, to pursue education, and to give back to their communities; and

WHEREAS, In 2014, former President Obama declared March 31st César Chávez Day, honoring Chávez as one of America's greatest champions for social justice;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Washington State Senate recognize César Estrada Chávez for dedicating his life to serving others and making the world a better place; and applaud his remarkable work to gain respect, dignity, and justice for farm workers, for the poor, and for all people during the celebration of César Chávez Day, March 31st.