



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

100 East Erie Street
Chicago, IL 60611

Legislation Text

File #: 19-0402, **Version:** 1

RESOLUTION FOR BOARD MEETING OF APRIL 18, 2019

RESOLUTION sponsored by the Board of Commissioners Honoring the Birth and Legacy of the Civil Rights and Labor Movement Activist César Chávez

WHEREAS, César Chávez was a leader for civil rights, Latinos, farm workers, and the labor movement; a community servant and social entrepreneur; a crusader for nonviolent social change; an environmentalist and consumer advocate; and, in the words of Robert F. Kennedy, "one of the heroic figures of our time"; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez's dream was to create an organization to protect and serve farm workers, whose poverty and disenfranchisement he had shared. Chávez led the first successful farm workers union in American history, achieving dignity, respect, fair wages, medical coverage, pension benefits and humane living conditions, as well as countless other rights and protections for hundreds of thousands of farm workers; and

WHEREAS, in 1966 César Chávez's organization became the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO, which shares in common with all organized labor the goals of dignity, respect, fair wages, medical coverage and pension protections for old age; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez brought to light the serious health hazards of agriculture pesticides to both consumers and farmworkers; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez said in his first major address after his 36 day 1988 fast over pesticide poisoning of farm workers, "the U.F.W. has always had to be something more than a union. Because our people are so poor. Because the color of our skin is dark. Because we often don't speak the language. Because the discrimination, the racism and the social dilemmas we confront transcend mere economic need. What good does it do to achieve the blessings of collective bargaining and make economic progress for people when their health is destroyed in the process? If we ignored pesticide poisoning-if we looked on as farm workers and their children are stricken-then all the other injustices our people face would be compounded by an even more deadly tyranny."; and

WHEREAS, the life of César Chávez transcends any one cause or struggle. He was a unique and humble labor leader, and a great humanitarian and communicator who influenced and inspired millions of Americans from many diverse walks of life to seek social justice and civil rights for the poor and disenfranchised in our society; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez was awarded the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Peace Prize during his lifetime and was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez Day is a U.S. federal commemorative holiday, proclaimed by President Barack Obama in 2014 that celebrates the birth and legacy of César Chávez on March 31st every year; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, on behalf of ourselves and staff, hereby recognize the contributions and accomplishments of civil rights and labor movement activist César Chávez; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution be spread upon the permanent Record of Proceedings of the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago and that a copy of same, suitably engrossed, be presented to August Sallas, President of the Hispanic American Labor Council.

Dated: April 18, 2019

Approved as to Form and Legality: Susan T. Morakalis, General Counsel