

# DENVER CITY COUNCIL



## Proclamation No. 25-0399 Cesar Chavez Day

**WHEREAS**, Cesar Estrada Chavez was born on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1927 on a small farm near Yuma, Arizona, and joined the migrant stream with his family at an early age; and

**WHEREAS**, During the Great Depression, Cesar Chavez' father lost his small farming business, and the family joined some 30,000 farm workers, following the crops from Arizona to Texas to California into Colorado; and

**WHEREAS**, Cesar Chavez left school following the 8<sup>th</sup> grade to work in the fields and vineyards of the Southwest to help support his family; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1944, at the young age of 17, Cesar Chavez joined the Navy and served this country honorably, and having the USNS Cesar Chavez (T-AKE-14), a Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ship, named after him in honor of his service and legacy as a civil rights and labor leader; and

**WHEREAS**, farm workers suffered from racial discrimination and exploitative working conditions, and so Cesar Chavez dedicated his life to improving the plight of farm workers through struggle, sacrifice and self-denial; and

**WHEREAS**, Cesar Chavez with the influential labor activist Dolores Huerta in 1962 created the National Farm Workers Association, which later became the United Farm Worker of America (UFW), that would bring justice to farmworkers that had been denied the right to build a union; therefore, had no collective bargaining rights throughout history, winning equal rights and fair treatment against scrupulous growers; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 16, 1965, Filipino and Mexican farm workers officially joined forces to strike and picket together for farm labor justice; and

**WHEREAS**, Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, led a strike of California grape pickers to demand higher wages and called for boycott against grapes and lettuce; and

**WHEREAS**, Chavez and the UFW believed in the principles of nonviolence, practiced by Mahatma Ghandi and Martin Luther King, Jr., using tactics such as pilgrimages, boycotts, marches, strikes, and fasts to lead a successful 5-year boycott against agribusiness, developing a national movement; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1975 Cesar Chavez and the work of the UFW resulted in California Agricultural Labor Relations Act, a groundbreaking law that protected farmworkers and ensured them the right to unionize; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1994, President Bill Clinton posthumously awarded Cesar Chavez the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States; and



**WHEREAS**, in 1991, Mexico awarded Cesar Chavez the Aztec Eagle, Mexico's highest award presented to people of Mexican heritage; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 23, 1993 Cesar Chavez died peacefully in his sleep in San Luis, Arizona; and

**WHEREAS**, Cesar Chavez was an inspiration to millions of Americans to seek out social justice and civil rights for the poor and disenfranchised across the world; now, therefore,

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER:**

**Section 1.** That Monday, March 31<sup>st</sup> be recognized as Cesar Chavez Day.

**Section 2.** That the Clerk of the City and County of Denver shall affix the seal of the City and County of Denver to this proclamation and that a copy be transmitted to the Cesar Chavez Peace and Justice Committee.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL March 24, 2025

\_\_\_\_\_ PRESIDENT

