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## *House of Representatives* **RECOGNIZING CESAR CHAVEZ!**

**HON. BOB FILNER**  
OF CALIFORNIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**MR. FILNER:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce H.R. 963, legislation to rename the Southeastern Post Office, in San Diego, California, the "Cesar E. Chavez Post Office."

In San Diego, as well as across the Nation, the name Cesar Chavez symbolizes dignity, admiration, and devotion to equality and human rights. This man dedicated his life to ameliorating human rights in our country. In the 1950s and 60s, when minorities were given little or no respect or rights, Cesar Chavez cleared the path for equality.

In the early 1950s, after fighting in World War II, Chavez began his involvement in battling racial and economic discrimination against Chicanos. As his attention and personal interest focused on the poor working conditions of farm workers, he realized that his dream was to start an organization to aid these workers.

Having been a farm worker himself, he was far too familiar with the inhumane working conditions farm workers were forced to endure. In 1962, he founded the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), and in 1965, the NFWA joined an AFLCIO sponsored union boycott against major table and wine grape growers. Through this five year long, successful boycott that rallied millions of supporters, the NFWA merged with the AFLCIO union and formed the United Farm Workers (UFW).

From the beginning, the UFW followed the principals of nonviolence practiced by Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He organized peaceful demonstrations to bring attention to the farm worker's conditions. His slogan, Si se puede!, Yes we can!, became known worldwide.

National attention to the farm workers came in 1968 when Senator Robert Kennedy visited Cesar Chavez in California after Chavez led a 25 day fast. Kennedy was right when he called Cesar "one of the heroic figures of our time."

Cesar continued to organize boycotts and strikes around the world against table grape growers in California. His efforts paid off when, in 1975, growers supported then California Governor Jerry Brown's collective bargaining law for farm workers, the 1975 Agricultural Labor Relations Act.

Cesar Chavez is remembered today for his continual efforts and dedication to justice and equality. As Cesar said, "There are many reasons why a man does what he does. To be himself he must be able to give it all. If a leader cannot give it all, he cannot expect his people to give anything." The people of San Diego thank Cesar Chavez for always giving his all.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation that recognizes such an honorable man by naming a San Diego Post Office in his honor.