

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, in remembrance of the late labor and civil rights leader Cesar Estrada Chavez, Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31) released the following statement:

“Senator Robert F. Kennedy called him ‘one of the heroic figures of our time.’ Cardinal Roger M. Mahoney called him ‘a special prophet for the world’s farm workers.’ I call him a true leader whose service sowed a fruitful harvest that will continue to inspire and guide us for generations to come.

“Today, March 31, marks the birthday of one of our nation’s greatest civil rights leaders, Cesar Estrada Chavez. Chavez committed himself to helping his community protect their fundamental rights—organizing farm workers to campaign for safe working conditions, fair wages, decent housing, and the outlawing of child labor. He went on to found the National Farm Workers Association in 1962, which later became the United Farm Workers of America (UFW).

“Under his leadership, thousands of migrant farm workers organized to fight for fair wages, health care, pension benefits, decent housing, and respect. A strong believer in the principles of nonviolence practiced by Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Chavez called attention to the terrible working and living conditions of America’s farm workers through peaceful tactics.

“Chavez’ legacy lives on today and we in Congress are working to ensure that his legacy is recognized and remembered. As people across the nation chant Cesar Chavez’ immortal words, ‘Si se puede,’ meaning ‘It can be done,’ let us be reminded that Chavez’ work is not over. We must all continue to work for equality, justice, and dignity for all Americans.”

The Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008, S. 2739 introduced by Senator Jeff Bingaman (NM) earlier this month, includes language that calls on the secretary of the Interior to study sites in California, Arizona, and elsewhere that are significant to the life of Cesar E. Chavez and the farm labor movement to determine whether they meet the criteria to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places or be designated as national historic landmarks.

S. 2739 also includes language from H.R. 512, the [National Museum of the American Latino Commission Act](#), a bill authored by Rep. Becerra to explore the feasibility of creating a National Museum of the American Latino in Washington, D.C.

“It is my hope that the Senate will soon pass S. 2739 and that the president will sign the bill into law so that we can ensure that the contributions to this nation made by great American Latinos, like Cesar Chavez, are recognized and remembered,” Rep. Becerra said.

- [Click here](#) to read Rep. Becerra’s full statement at the [Becerra Blog](#).
- [Click here](#) to visit Rep. Becerra’s National Museum of the American Latino Commission Act homepage.

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