

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT**

**RESOLUTION NO. 17-**

**DECLARING MARCH 21 TO MARCH 28, 2017, AS A WEEK OF PUBLIC SERVICE  
IN HONOR OF CÉSAR CHÁVEZ**

WHEREAS, César Chávez recognized that for many people, spanning many generations and many ethnicities, the path to a better life frequently begins in the fields. For many farm workers, the American Dream means a life of self-sacrifice, hard work, and perseverance; and

WHEREAS, in San Jose, César Chávez was introduced to the social teachings of the Catholic Church and trained in community organizing strategies and tactics. César Chávez and Fred Ross, an organizer for the Community Service Organization (CSO), established CSO chapters across California and Arizona during the 1950s, helping Latinos register to vote, pushing for basic public services and infrastructure in the barrios, peacefully battling police brutality and racial discrimination, and creating the most effective Latino civil rights group of its era; and

WHEREAS, in 1965, in a partnership with a union of Filipino American farm workers, César Chávez organized a major strike against grape growers in California. The following year César Chávez led an unprecedented 340-mile march, from Delano to Sacramento that placed the farm workers' plight before the conscience of the American people. Supporters carried slogans with the words "HUELGA" (strike) and "VIVA LA CAUSA" (long live our cause), advocating for improved compensation and labor conditions. Later efforts resulted in the enactment of California's historic Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975, the first and still the only law in the nation to "encourage and protect" the right of farm workers to organize and bargain with their employers; and

WHEREAS, César Chávez successfully increased public awareness of farm worker working conditions. To many Californians the farm workers' struggles are an issue from the past, a belief reflected by the fact that farm worker suffering typically takes place in remote areas far from cities, thereby rendering farm workers invisible to our society. The fruits and vegetables that we enjoy in our daily lives are produced by farm workers who often endure long hours of backbreaking work and still face challenges such as inadequate enforcement of pesticide, safety, and labor protection laws in the fields; and

WHEREAS, through countless strikes, boycotts, marches, and fasts that produced many victories and some defeats, César Chávez never stopped his peaceful battles on behalf of the farm workers with whom he shared his life. His dedication to his work earned him the respect of some of our greatest political and civil rights leaders, including Senator Robert Kennedy, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Reverend Jesse Jackson. César Chávez's motto in life, "Sí Se Puede!" or "Yes We Can!" has served as an inspiration not only for Latinos, but for working Americans of all walks of life.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Santa Clara Valley Water District hereby recognizes March 21 to March 28, 2017, as a week of public service in honor of César Chávez.

SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
John L. Varela  
Chair/Board of Directors

ATTEST: MICHELE L. KING, CMC

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Clerk/Board of Directors