

- 4) The author or co-author of the resolution must represent the district in which the facility is located, and the resolution must identify the specific highway segment or structure being named.
- 5) The segment of highway being named must not exceed five miles in length.
- 6) The proposed designation must reflect a community consensus and be without local opposition.
- 7) The proposed designation may not supersede an existing designation unless the sponsor can document that a good faith effort has uncovered no opposition to rescinding the prior designation.

This resolution:

- 1) Recounts the life and career of Charles “Charlie” Barra.
- 2) Designates the Russian River Bridge and Overhead, bridge number 10-0310 at postmile 33.6, on State Route 20 in the County of Mendocino, as the “Charlie Barra Memorial Bridge.”
- 3) Requests Caltrans to determine the cost of appropriate signs consistent with the signing requirements for the state highway system showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover that cost, to erect those signs.

COMMENTS:

- 1) *Purpose of the resolution.* According to the author, “Charlie Barra was a key part of California’s wine history and legacy. He was born in 1926 in Calpella and lived most of his life in Mendocino County. He started his work in the vineyards at a young age and eventually purchased Redwood Valley Vineyards in 1955. He planted hundreds of acres over the years and eventually launched Barra of Mendocino wines in 1997. His public service career spanned over 20 years – from the County Planning Commission and the County Board of Supervisors. He also served in key roles in local civic affairs, including as the founder of the St. Mary’s School Foundation and founder of the North Coast Grape Growers Association. He served on the North Coast Grape Growers Association Board of Directors for over 41 years. Charlie helped established the first appellation designation, California North Coast Appellation, in the United States.”

- 2) *Background.* Charles “Charlie” Barra was born in Calpella, California, in 1926, to first-generation Italian immigrants. Barra grew up in Mendocino County, graduating from Ukiah High School in 1946. He served in the United States Army from 1952 to 1954 and returned to Mendocino County. As noted by the author, Barra started his work in the vineyards at a young age and eventually purchased Redwood Valley Vineyards in 1955. He planted hundreds of acres over the years and certified all of his vineyards as farmed organically by 1989. He eventually launched Barra of Mendocino wines in 1997.

Barra made numerous contributions to the wine industry as an innovator of harvesting equipment and practices, including pioneering overhead frost protection. Additionally, in 1963, he founded the North Coast Grape Growers Association and served as a board member for 41 years, including serving as president. He advocated for a variety of grower causes, including varietal percentage change in wines from 51% to 75%; the first appellation designation on wine labels in the United States, which signifies the geographical area where the grapes were grown; and pricing regulations that require a grower and winery to agree on prices before grapes were crushed.

Barra also made significant contributions to his community through public service, including helping to create the Redwood Valley County Water District, serving as a member of the Mendocino County Planning Commission, and he was appointed to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors in 1968 by then Governor Ronald Reagan. Additionally, Barra created the St. Mary’s School Foundation of Ukiah, Inc., serving as its president for 21 years.

Charles Barra passed away on June 29, 2019, at 93 years old. He is survived by his wife of 39 years. Writing in support of the resolution, Mendocino County notes, “Charlie Barra was a pillar of Mendocino County—deeply rooted in the community as a lifelong resident, veteran, farmer, public servant, and industry pioneer.”

Further, “Designating the bridge at post mile 33.6 on State Route 20 in his honor is a fitting tribute to a man whose influence touched every corner of Mendocino County—from agriculture to public service to education.”

- 3) *Consistent with committee policy.* This resolution is consistent with committee policy.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

POSITIONS: (Communicated to the committee before noon on Wednesday,
April 1, 2026.)

SUPPORT:

County of Mendocino

OPPOSITION:

None received

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