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THIRD READING

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Bill No: SR 80  
Author: Padilla (D), et al.  
Introduced: 2/12/26  
Vote: Majority

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**SUBJECT:** César Chávez Day

**SOURCE:** Author

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**DIGEST:** This resolution calls upon all Californians to observe César Chávez's birthday, March 31, 2026, as a day of public service.

**ANALYSIS:** This resolution makes the following legislative findings:

- 1) In 2000, the Legislature passed, and Governor Gray Davis signed into law, Senate Bill 984 (Chapter 213 of the Statutes of 2000), to create the first annual state holiday in the country on César Chávez's birthday, March 31. Under that law, the State Board of Education also created a statewide curriculum on César Chávez and encourages schools across the state to engage teachers and students in service learning projects as a way of honoring the legendary farm labor and civil rights leader.
- 2) César Chávez successfully increased public awareness of farmworker working conditions. To many Californians, the farmworkers' struggles are an issue from the past, a belief reflected by the fact that farmworker suffering typically takes place in remote areas far from cities, thereby rendering farmworkers invisible to our society. The fruits and vegetables that we enjoy in our daily lives are produced by farmworkers 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.
- 3) Through countless strikes, boycotts, marches, and fasts that produced many victories and some defeats, César Chávez, who even considered vegetarianism an integral part of living nonviolently, never stopped his peaceful battles on behalf of the farmworkers 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 Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and 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.

- 4) Although César Chávez was uncomfortable with personal recognition in life, since his passing Chávez has been honored in hundreds of communities. César Chávez was awarded "El Aguila Azteca" (the Aztec Eagle), Mexico's highest award presented to people of Mexican heritage. In 1994, President Bill Clinton posthumously presented César Chávez with America's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 2006, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger inducted César Chávez into the first class of the California Hall of Fame. In 2011, the United States Navy announced naming the latest Lewis and Clark-class cargo ship being built in San Diego the USNS César Chávez.

This resolution calls upon all Californians to learn from César Chávez's life and his mission of nonviolence, social justice, and selfless service to others.

#### **Related/Prior Legislation**

SR 29 (Arreguín, 2025) – Adopted in Senate.  
HR 23 (Ortega, 2025) – Adopted in Assembly.  
SR 69 (Menjivar, 2024) – Adopted in Senate.

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

**SUPPORT:** (Verified 2/23/26)

None received

**OPPOSITION:** (Verified 2/23/26)

None received

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2/25/26 16:26:31

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