

### *Presents Congressional Record Statement to Latino Community*

*Stockton, Calif.* – Tomorrow, Congressman Jerry McNerney (CA-11) will present a copy of the following Congressional Record Statement at the Bracero plaque dedication ceremony in honor of César Chávez's 85th birthday and his fight against the use of the short-handled hoe. Arturo Ocampo, Assistant Provost for Diversity at University of Pacific, will accept the statement on behalf of the community.

### **In Honor of César Chávez**

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the memory of César Chávez on the occasion of what would have been his 85th birthday.

César Chávez was born on March 31, 1927 near Yuma, Arizona. After losing their family farm, the members of the Chávez family became migrant workers, moving to California and following seasonal harvests around the state. Upon experiencing the exploitation of migrant workers and injustices committed against them, Mr. Chávez became a champion of workers' rights.

In 1962, Mr. Chávez and Dolores Huerta co-founded National Farm Workers Association, later known as the United Farm Workers (UFW). Mr. Chávez was inspired by leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and understood the power of non-violence as a tool for change. As a leader of UFW, he used non-violent tactics and strong organizing methods to protest poor working conditions. Mr. Chávez fought for basic improvements for farm workers such as access to drinking water, shade, and restrooms. He was also a tireless advocate for fair wages and decent living conditions.

César Chávez led the fight for the passage of the landmark California Agricultural Labor Relations Act in 1975. This law was the first in the nation to guarantee farm workers the right to organize and bargain collectively. Additionally, his understanding of human suffering led him to fight against the use of the short-handled hoe, which caused personal injury and pain to farm laborers. A California Supreme Court ruling in 1975 banned the use of this tool.

Mr. Chávez was known for his spirit as much as his accomplishments. Mr. Chávez and the UFW embraced an empowering and enduring rallying cry that exemplifies his optimism of the human spirit: “Sí se puede,” or “Yes we can.”

César Chávez is an inspirational figure in California and throughout our nation. I have no doubt that his efforts have made a positive impact on the lives of countless workers. It is for these reasons that I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring César Chávez on the occasion of the 85th anniversary of his birth.