

1 Introduced by Council Member Dennis:  
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4 **RESOLUTION 2021-162**

5 A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MARCH 31, 2021 AS CESAR  
6 CHAVEZ DAY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.  
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8 **WHEREAS**, Cesar Chavez was born on March 31, 1927 in Yuma,  
9 Arizona, one of five children. When a bank foreclosure forced them  
10 to leave their small farm, the Chavez family joined numerous others  
11 in migrating to California, looking for work and following the harvest  
12 during the Great Depression. The labor was intense, woefully underpaid  
13 and provided squalid living conditions in overcrowded, primitive  
14 housing with no electricity or running water; and

15 **WHEREAS**, raised into the life of a migrant farm worker, Cesar  
16 Chavez was exposed to deplorable working conditions, dangerous  
17 pesticides and denied the most basic protections, including minimum  
18 wages, health care, and access to drinking water. Cesar Chavez devoted  
19 his life to correcting these injustices, because he believed every  
20 job has dignity, every life has value, and that everyone should have  
21 the chance to get ahead. After returning from military service during  
22 World War II, Chavez fought for freedom in American agricultural  
23 fields. Alongside Dolores Huerta, he founded the United Farm Workers,  
24 and through decades of organizing, even in the face of opposition,  
25 he grew a movement to advance "La Causa" across the country; and

26 **WHEREAS**, Cesar Chavez utilized non-violent civil disobedience  
27 methods - worker strikes, boycotts and hunger fasts - modeled after  
28 Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. to affect social change.  
29 In 1966, Chavez led striking farm workers on a 340-mile march from  
30 Delano to Sacramento, California to bring awareness to "La Causa" of  
31 farmworkers. He then organized a grape boycott that drew 17 million

1 supporters nationwide, forcing growers to accept some of the first  
2 farm worker contracts in history. As a result of his efforts,  
3 California passed the state's landmark Agricultural Labor Relations  
4 Act in 1975, which established and protected the rights of all  
5 farmworkers to form unions and bargain for better wages and working  
6 conditions; and

7       **WHEREAS**, when Cesar Chavez passed away in his sleep in 1993 at  
8 the age of 66, more than 40,000 people attended his funeral. In 1994,  
9 President Bill Clinton awarded Chavez a posthumous Medal of Freedom,  
10 the highest civilian award; and

11       **WHEREAS**, in 2014 March 31<sup>st</sup> was proclaimed by President Barack  
12 Obama to be Cesar Chavez Day, a U.S. federal commemorative holiday  
13 to celebrate the birth and legacy of the civil rights and labor  
14 movement activist. Cesar Chavez Day is also honored in ten states:  
15 California, Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, New Mexico, Texas,  
16 Utah, Wisconsin and Rhode Island; now therefore

17       **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Jacksonville:

18       **Section 1.**       The City of Jacksonville hereby recognizes March  
19 31, 2021 as Cesar Chavez Day to celebrate the founder of the first  
20 United Farm Workers Union and one of America's greatest champions for  
21 social justice, and also to honor his tireless organizing, his  
22 resilience through setbacks and his refusal to scale back his dreams.  
23 Jacksonville City Council encourages the observation of Cesar Chavez  
24 Day as an opportunity to participate in service projects to honor his  
25 legacy and to improve the lives of all in our community, and to  
26 appreciate the everyday contributions our farm workers make to our  
27 economy and livelihood.

28       **Section 2.       Effective Date.**   This Resolution shall become  
29 effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective  
30 without the Mayor's signature.

1 Form Approved:

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3 /s/ Paige H. Johnston

4 Office of General Counsel

5 Legislation Prepared By: Colleen Hampsey, City Council Research

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