

CHAPTER 31

GOVERNMENT - STATE

HOUSE BILL 26-1339

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) Duran and Garcia, Bacon, Barron, Boesenecker, Bottoms, Bradfield, Bradley, Brooks, Brown, Caldwell, Camacho, Carter, Clifford, English, Espenozo, Feret, Flanell, Froelich, Garcia Sander, Gilchrist, Goldstein, Gonzalez R., Hamrick, Hartsook, Jackson, Joseph, Keltie, Lieder, Lindsay, Lukens, Mabrey, Marshall, Martinez, Mauro, McCluskie, McCormick, Nguyen, Paschal, Phillips, Richardson, Ricks, Rutinel, Rydin, Sirota, Slaugh, Smith, Soper, Stewart K., Stewart R., Story, Suckla, Taggart, Titone, Valdez, Velasco, Weinberg, Willford, Winter T., Woodrow, Woog, Zokaie, Johnson; also SENATOR(S) Danielson and Cutter, Amabile, Baisley, Ball, Benavidez, Bridges, Bright, Carson, Catlin, Daugherty, Exum, Frizell, Gonzales J., Hinrichsen, Jodeh, Kipp, Kirkmeyer, Kolker, Lindstedt, Liston, Marchman, Mullica, Pelton B., Pelton R., Rich, Roberts, Rodriguez, Simpson, Snyder, Sullivan, Wallace, Weissman, Zamora Wilson, Coleman.

AN ACT

CONCERNING A CHANGE IN THE NAME OF THE VOLUNTARY LEGAL HOLIDAY OBSERVED ON MARCH 31 FROM "CESAR CHAVEZ DAY" TO "FARM WORKERS DAY".

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly finds and declares that:

(a) After years of discrimination and unfair labor practices, brave farm workers and activists organized and marched hundreds of miles to demand fair wages, dignity, and respect. In 1975, these efforts resulted in the California "Agricultural Labor Relations Act", which was a groundbreaking law protecting the right of farm workers to unionize.

(b) The Farm Workers Movement achieved:

(I) The first collective bargaining agreement between farm workers and growers in the continental United States;

(II) The first union contracts requiring rest periods, clean drinking water, hand washing facilities, and clothing protective against pesticide exposure;

(III) The first ban on pesticide spraying while workers were in the fields and the

Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.

first ban on dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane, commonly known as DDT, and other dangerous pesticides;

(IV) The first and only performing pension plan for retired farm workers;

(V) The first union contracts regulating safety and sanitary conditions in farm labor camps and banning discrimination in employment and the sexual harassment of female workers;

(VI) The abolition of the use of "el cortito", the infamous short-handled hoe that physically disabled generations of farm workers; and

(VII) The extension of state coverage for unemployment, disability, and workers' compensation to farm workers.

(2) The general assembly further finds and declares that:

(a) Given the deeply disturbing allegations of sexual abuse by Cesar Chavez, the general assembly cannot, in good conscience, continue to celebrate a state holiday that bears his name;

(b) This decision is not about erasing history or diminishing the contributions that have shaped Latino communities across the country. It is about honoring the courage of the girls and women, including the renowned labor leader and co-founder of the United Farm Workers, Dolores Huerta, who suffered in silence for decades before bravely speaking out.

(c) The general assembly acknowledges that many processes will ensue over the coming year to consider renaming parks, buildings, roadways, schools, and other areas across the state that bear Cesar Chavez's name. The general assembly acknowledges and supports these efforts and understands that further legislative action will be required to further amend the state holiday observed on March 31 after 2027.

(3) Therefore, it is appropriate to designate March 31, 2026, and March 31, 2027, as "Farm Workers Day" to honor the history of farm workers and celebrate their ongoing contributions to our communities, state, and country. The name of future observances will require additional legislative action.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-11-112, **amend** (1), (2), and (3) as follows:

24-11-112. Farm Workers Day.

(1) The thirty-first day of March in ~~each year the same being the anniversary of the birth of Cesar Estrada Chavez, 2026 AND 2027~~ shall be known as "Cesar Chavez FARM WORKERS Day" and appropriate observance may be held by the public and in all public schools of the state in tribute to ~~his unselfish commitment to the principles of social justice and respect for human dignity.~~

(2) The head of a state agency may allow an employee of the agency to have a

day off with pay on ~~Cesar Chavez~~ FARM WORKERS day in lieu of any other legal holiday described in section 24-11-101 (1) that occurs in the same state fiscal year on a weekday, other than a weekday on which an election is held throughout the state, on which the state agency is required to be open but on which the operations of the agency are required to be maintained at only a minimum level.

(3) On ~~Cesar Chavez~~ FARM WORKERS day, each state agency shall remain open and conduct the operations of the agency at no less than a minimum level.

SECTION 3. Safety clause. The general assembly finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state institutions.

Approved: March 31, 2026