MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS   April 9, 2024

Proclaiming April 10 Dolores Huerta Day in Los Angeles County

Dolores Clara Fernández Huerta is an American labor leader and civil rights activist. She, along with Cesar Chavez, co-founded the United Farmworkers Association, which later merged with the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee to become the United Farm Workers (UFW). She is one of the most influential labor activists of the 20th century and a leader of the Chicano civil rights movement.

Born on April 10, 1930 in Dawson, New Mexico, Huerta was the second of three children of Alicia and Juan Fernandez. Juan was a farm worker and miner who later became a state legislator in 1938. Dolores's mother juggled multiple jobs to make ends meet. Alicia's activism and deep compassion for others greatly influenced her daughter.

Growing up, Dolores witnessed ardent racism against Latino- Americans. In fact, a schoolteacher accused Huerta of cheating because her papers were too well-written. Also, in 1945 at the end of World War II, white men brutally beat her brother for wearing a Zoot-Suit, a popular Latino fashion.

Dolores received an associate teaching degree from the University of the

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Pacific's Delta College. She briefly taught school in the 1950s, but after witnessing so many hungry farm children coming to school, she felt would have a greater impact by organizing farmers and farm workers. In 1955, when she founded the Stockton chapter of the Community Service Organization (CSO). CSO led voter registration drives and fought for economic stability for Latinos.

Huerta met activist César Chávez through a CDO associate. In 1962, Huerta and Chávez founded the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), the predecessor of the United Farm Workers' Union (UFW), which formed three years later. Huerta served as UFW Vice President until 1999.

Huerta helped organize the 1965 Delano strike of 5,000 grape workers and was the lead negotiator in the workers' contract that followed. During her time at the UFW, Huerta organized workers, negotiated contracts, and advocated for safer working conditions including the elimination of harmful pesticides. She also fought for unemployment and healthcare benefits for agricultural workers. Huerta led the nationwide table grape boycotts in the late 1960s that led to a successful union contract by 1970.

In 1973, Huerta led another consumer boycott of grapes that resulted in the ground-breaking California Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975. This law allowed farm workers to form unions and bargain for higher wages and better work conditions.

Throughout the 1970s and '80s, Huerta worked to improve workers' legislative representation. During the 1990s and 2000s, she worked to elect more Latinos and women to political office and championed women's issues.

Huerta has received numerous awards for her community service and advocacy

for workers', immigrants', and women's rights, including the Eugene V. Debs Foundation Outstanding American Award, the United States Presidential Eleanor Roosevelt Award for Human Rights, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She was the first Latina inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame, in 1993.

Today, Dolores Huerta continues to work developing leaders and advocating for the working poor, women, and children. As founder and president of the Dolores Huerta Foundation, she travels across the country fighting for equity and civil rights. Her contributions to California and Latinos across the country have inspired generations of leaders fighting for justice for all workers. To that end, it is fitting that Los Angeles County uplift Dolores's contributions.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Proclaim April 10 as Dolores Huerta Day in Los Angeles County beginning in 2024 and consequently in future years.
2. Encourage Angelenos to celebrate the many contributions of Dolores Huerta by inquiring about her work, and volunteering in causes she valued.

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