

**Assembly Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 156**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Weber  
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Alejo and Bonta)**

June 2, 2014

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 156—Relative to the Itliong-Vera Cruz Memorial Bridge.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 156, as introduced, Weber. Itliong-Vera Cruz Memorial Bridge.

This measure would designate the overpass on South Woodman Street that crosses State Route 54, also known as the Filipino American Highway, in the City of San Diego as the Itliong-Vera Cruz Memorial Bridge. The measure would request the Department of Transportation to determine the cost for appropriate signs showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources covering that cost, to erect those signs.

Fiscal committee: yes.

1 WHEREAS, Larry Itliong was a Filipino American labor leader  
2 who founded the Filipino Farm Labor Union (FFLU) in 1956. He  
3 was also the President of the Agricultural Workers Organizing  
4 Committee (AWOC). He was born in 1913 in the Pangilinan  
5 Province of the Philippines and immigrated to the United States  
6 in 1929. His first involvement in a labor strike was one year later  
7 in 1930. Itliong was a self-taught labor leader and was instrumental  
8 in leading protests in California and Alaska; and  
9 WHEREAS, After he founded the FFLU, Larry Itliong became  
10 the assistant director of the United Farm Workers Organizing

1 Committee (UFWOC) which eventually became the United Farm  
2 Workers (UFW). Itliong is viewed as “one of the fathers of the  
3 West Coast labor movement”; and

4 WHEREAS, On Sept. 8, 1965, Filipino farm workers, known  
5 as manongs, organized by Itliong began the grape strike that set  
6 the stage for the boycott that would lead César Chávez and  
7 thousands of farmworker families to create the nation’s pioneering  
8 agricultural labor union, the UFW; and

9 WHEREAS, Mexican and Filipino workers had been historically  
10 pitted against one another to suppress wages or break strikes. Yet  
11 Itliong approached César Chávez, then busy organizing the  
12 National Farm Workers Association (NFWA). For the first time,  
13 Filipino and Mexican workers became “brothers,” eventually  
14 forming one organization — the UFWOC — with Itliong as an  
15 assistant director, one of several Filipino leaders on the executive  
16 board; and

17 WHEREAS, Larry Itliong resigned from the UFWOC in 1971  
18 and dedicated the remainder of his life to improving the lives of  
19 retired Filipino farm workers, and to a wide variety of community  
20 and civic projects, many of which were related to the Filipino  
21 American community. He died in 1977; and

22 WHEREAS, Philip Vera Cruz was a Filipino American labor  
23 leader, a farm worker, and a leader and activist for the Asian  
24 American civil rights movement. He was one of the founders of  
25 the AWOC, which later merged with César Chávez’s NFWA and  
26 gave birth to the UFW. Philip Vera Cruz was a long-time vice  
27 president of the UFW; and

28 WHEREAS, Philip Vera Cruz was born in Ilocos Sur in the  
29 Philippines in 1904 and immigrated to the United States in 1926.  
30 Vera Cruz also worked in canneries and restaurants and attended  
31 Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, for a year. He joined  
32 the National Farm Labor Union which was affiliated with the  
33 American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial  
34 Organizations in the 1950’s. Along with Larry Itliong, Philip Vera  
35 Cruz convinced César Chávez and Dolores Huerta’s predominantly  
36 Mexican/Latino NFWA to join the Grape Strike and Boycott of  
37 1965 demanding better pay and benefits; and

38 WHEREAS, One week later César Chávez and Dolores Huerta  
39 joined the strike that eventually brought an end to the unfair wages

1 and benefits with a 300 mile pilgrimage from Delano to  
2 Sacramento; and

3 WHEREAS, After Philip Vera Cruz resigned from the UFW in  
4 1977, he remained loyal to the UFW and the unionizing movement  
5 and maintained his dignity as a Filipino American supporting his  
6 community and fighting for worker's rights. He affirmed an  
7 embodiment of internationalism and believed in serving the people  
8 instead of making profits. He died in 1994; and

9 WHEREAS, The contributions of Larry Itliong and Philip Vera  
10 Cruz and other Filipino American farm workers were instrumental  
11 in starting the Grape Strike and Boycott of 1965; and

12 WHEREAS, Together the Filipino and Mexican farm laborers  
13 formed the United Farm Workers union (UFW), which would not  
14 have been as successful without this coalition of Filipino and  
15 Chicano workers coming together in unity; now, therefore, be it

16 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*  
17 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature designates the overpass  
18 on South Woodman Street that crosses State Route 54, also known  
19 as the Filipino American Highway, in the City of San Diego as  
20 the Itliong-Vera Cruz Memorial Bridge; and be it further

21 *Resolved*, That the Department of Transportation is requested  
22 to determine the cost of erecting the appropriate signs, consistent  
23 with the signing requirements for the state highway system,  
24 showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations  
25 from nonstate sources covering that cost, to erect those signs; and  
26 be it further

27 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
28 of this resolution to the Director of Transportation and to the author  
29 for appropriate distribution.