

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 17, 2014

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 156

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

June 2, 2014

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 156, as amended, 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~~ *a member* of the Agricultural Workers
4 Organizing Committee (AWOC). He was born in 1913 in the
5 ~~Pangilinan~~ *Pangasinan* Province of the Philippines and immigrated
6 to the United States in 1929. His first involvement in a labor strike
7 was one year later in 1930. Itliong was a self-taught labor leader
8 and was instrumental in leading protests in California and Alaska;
9 and

1 WHEREAS, After he founded the FFLU, Larry Itliong became
2 the assistant director of the United Farm Workers Organizing
3 Committee (UFWOC) which eventually became the United Farm
4 Workers (UFW). Itliong is viewed as “one of the fathers of the
5 West Coast labor movement”; and

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

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

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

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

30 WHEREAS, Philip Vera Cruz was born in Ilocos Sur in the
31 Philippines in 1904 and immigrated to the United States in 1926.
32 Vera Cruz also worked in canneries and restaurants and attended
33 Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, for a year. He joined
34 the National Farm Labor Union which was affiliated with the
35 American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial
36 Organizations in the 1950’s. Along with Larry Itliong, Philip Vera
37 Cruz convinced César Chávez and Dolores Huerta’s predominantly
38 Mexican/Latino NFWA to join the Grape Strike and Boycott of
39 1965 demanding better pay and benefits; and

1 WHEREAS, One week later César Chávez and Dolores Huerta
2 joined the strike that eventually brought an end to the unfair wages
3 and benefits with a 300 mile pilgrimage from Delano to
4 Sacramento; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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