



Date: October 18, 2016

To: Patrick H. West, City Manager *T.M.W.*

From: *AJB*
Amy J. Bodek, Director of Development Services

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Human Relations Commission letter of recommendation to enact a Resolution to commemorate human rights advocate, farm worker, and labor organizer Larry Itliong, on October 25, 2016**

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) would like to submit the attached letter to the Mayor and City Council recommending that the City of Long Beach enact a resolution to commemorate human rights advocate, farm worker, and labor organizer Larry Itliong, on October 25, 2016.

As the Long Beach City Council's principle advisory commission promoting peace, tolerance, acceptance and mutual respect, the Human Relations Commission requests the City Council to officially commemorate organizer Larry Itliong.

For further information regarding this Human Relations Commission recommendation, please contact Tracy Colunga, Neighborhood Relations Officer, at (562) 570-4413.

AJB TC TG BP
Q:\BELINDA\TERESA\HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION\TFF LARRY ITLIONG COMMEMORATION DOC

ATTACHMENT

CC: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR
TOM MODICA, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
ARTURO SANCHEZ, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
REBECCA JIMENEZ, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER
TRACY COLUNGA, NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONS OFFICER

**CITY OF LONG BEACH
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

**Miles McNeeley, Chair
Elaine Bernal, Vice Chair
Elisa Buchanan, Commissioner
Nikole Cababa, Commissioner
Shane Devins, Commissioner**



**Amy Eriksen, Commissioner
Desmond Fletcher, Commissioner
Otis Hogan, Commissioner
Rohida Kahn, Commissioner
Veronica Quincy, Commissioner**

October 13, 2016

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
City of Long Beach
333 W. Ocean Boulevard, 14th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802

Re: Resolution to Commemorate Human Rights Advocate, Farm Worker, and Labor Organizer Larry Itliong, on October 25, 2016

Dear Mayor and City Council Members:

As the Long Beach City Council's principle advisory commission promoting peace, tolerance, acceptance and mutual respect, the Human Relations Commission requests that the City Council of Long Beach officially commemorate human rights advocate, farm worker, and labor organizer Larry Itliong, on October 25, 2016.

Currently, the State of California, the County of Los Angeles, and the City of Carson recognize Larry Itliong for his contributions. Larry Itliong was born on October 25, 1913, in Ilocos, Philippines. In 1929, at the age of 15, he migrated to the United States with a 6th Grade education. During this time, Filipino farm workers faced discrimination and low wages, and he became inspired to participate in his first labor strike in 1930. His life was spent working and organizing unions from California, Washington, and even seasonally in Alaskan canneries. He eventually settled in Central California, where he became instrumental in the farm labor movement of the 1960s.

Larry Itliong led the Delano Grape Strike with over 1,000 farm laborers staging the first walkout on September 8, 1965, in response to growers refusing to pay \$1.40 an hour for wages as demanded by the union. Although Larry Itliong suffered through violence from law enforcement and grower's security workers in response to his activism, he continued his work to strengthen labor rights. Larry Itliong led the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), whose labor membership consisted of workers predominantly of Filipino descent, which initially started the Delano Grape Strike. The group later made the

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unprecedented move to cross ethnic lines and persuaded Cesar Chavez's labor group, the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), to combine forces with Filipino farm workers to strengthen their collective efforts. Together, they established the United Farm Workers of America Organizing Committee of the AFL-CIO, with Larry Itliong elected the Vice President. Larry Itliong's work is viewed among historians as crucial to the farm labor movement of the 1960s.

In 2013, Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill 123, requiring California public schools to include the contribution of Filipino Americans to the farm labor movement. In addition, Union City, California, decided to transition naming a school—Itliong-Vera Cruz Middle School—accompanied by the signing of Assembly Bill 7 to require California public schools to teach students about the contributions of Larry Itliong.

The Filipino American National Historical Society designates October as Filipino American History Month. With a population of over 30,000 people of Filipino descent, it is evident that the City of Long Beach is an appropriate city to follow the footsteps of other municipalities that have recognized Larry Itliong for his contributions to California and U.S. history. As the Long Beach City Council's principal advisory commission promoting better understanding among the diverse ethnic cultural groups in Long Beach, the Human Relations Commission submits to the Long Beach City Council the following recommendation: The Human Relations Commission strongly urges the Long Beach City Council to enact a resolution for the City of Long Beach to observe Larry Itliong Day annually on October 25, in honor of Larry Itliong's human rights advocacy and labor organizing.

Respectfully,



Miles McNeeley, Chair
Human Relations Commission