

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 18, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

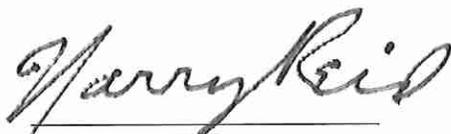
As Members of the Senate Democratic Hispanic Task Force, we respectfully urge you to award Dolores Huerta, a living icon of America's civil rights movement, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Ms. Huerta's commitment to the cause of freedom is well known all across America. Together with Cesar Chavez, Huerta founded the National Farm Workers Association, which eventually grew to become the United Farm Workers – our nation's first successful farm workers union. Dolores Huerta truly embodies the meritorious contribution to the security and national interest to our nation that the Presidential Medal of Freedom honors.

Born during the uncertainty of the Great Depression, Ms. Huerta's commitment to service and social justice began to surface in her early years in Stockton High School. After founding the Agricultural Workers Association in 1960, setting up voter registration drives, and fighting for the rights of tenants, Ms. Huerta joined Cesar Chavez to become a civil rights pioneer and champion of social and economic equality for farm workers and an agriculture community composed of Mexican, Filipino, African-American, Japanese, and Chinese working families. In 1968, she coordinated the East Coast table grape boycott, which was instrumental in helping get recognition for the farm workers' union. Through her role as a civil rights advocate, Ms. Huerta was instrumental in the enactment of the Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975—the first law in the country to grant farm workers the right to collectively organize and bargain for better wages and working conditions.

There is no doubt that Dolores Huerta's achievements are a testament to her dedication and passion for the betterment of Latino workers, their families and the working American community as a whole. Today, as an 80 year-old grandmother of 14 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren, Ms. Huerta continues to work tirelessly developing the next generation of leaders, advocating for working poor, women and children through the Dolores Huerta Foundation.

It is, therefore, fitting that the woman who has touched and changed the lives of so many working Americans be awarded the highest civilian award this nation has to offer. We believe there is no one more deserving of the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

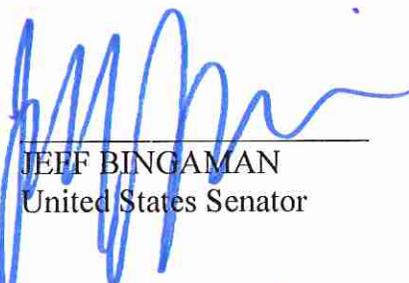
Sincerely,



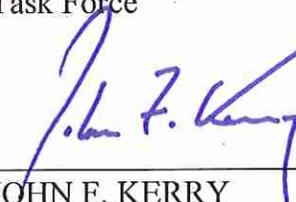
HARRY REID
Senate Majority Leader



ROBERT MENENDEZ
Chair, Senate Democratic Hispanic
Task Force



JEFF BINGAMAN
United States Senator



JOHN F. KERRY
United States Senator



KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND
United States Senator