

**Before the Board of Supervisors in and for the
County of Monterey, State of California**

Resolution No.:

Adopt Resolution Honoring the Life and Legacy of Isidro Hernandez Tovar, the Last Surviving Bracero of Chualar.

WHEREAS, Isidro Hernandez Tovar was born on May 15, 1944, in the town of Zapotlanejo, Jalisco, México, where he grew up in a community of limited economic opportunity but with a strong ambition to create a better future for himself and his family; and

WHEREAS, In 1963, at the age of 19, Isidro Hernandez Tovar was recruited into the Bracero Program, a guest worker program between Mexico and the United States from 1942 to 1964 that brought Mexican workers to support American agriculture and railroads, motivated by the promise of dignified work and inspired by returning Braceros who brought home symbols of opportunity, such as denim jeans, yellow boots, transistor radios, and stories of new possibilities; and

WHEREAS, Leaving his homeland behind, Isidro Hernandez Tovar traveled to the United States, where he worked in the Salinas Valley fields harvesting celery, lettuce, and garlic, and thinning crops with the infamous short-handled hoe known as El Cortito; and

WHEREAS, On September 17, 1963, while laboring in the celery fields of Chualar, California, Isidro Hernandez Tovar became a survivor of one of the deadliest labor-related, transportation tragedies in U.S. history, when a freight train collided with a makeshift bus carrying Bracero workers, killing 32 men and seriously injuring 25 others; and

WHEREAS, Isidro Hernandez Tovar was among the severely injured and spent more than a month in the hospital recovering, his survival and resilience standing as a testament to extraordinary strength during an incredibly painful chapter of his life; and

WHEREAS, After his recovery, Isidro Hernandez Tovar returned to Mexico for five years, before deciding in the early 1970s to resettle permanently in the United States, establishing his home in Los Angeles, California; and

WHEREAS, In 1974, Isidro Hernandez Tovar began his career with the Molding Corporation of America, where he dedicated more than 30 years of service until his retirement in 2006, embodying the dignity of hard work and perseverance; and

WHEREAS, Beyond his professional accomplishments, Isidro Hernandez Tovar built a strong and loving family with his wife of over fifty years, Carmelita Tovar, with whom he raised six children and created a legacy of resilience, dignity, and enduring love; and

WHEREAS, The life story of Isidro Hernandez Tovar reflects courage, endurance, and quiet heroism, serving as a living testament to the contributions and sacrifices of Bracero workers and immigrant laborers who helped shape the history and prosperity of the United States; and

WHEREAS, In 2023, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors declared Bracero Worker History Recognition Week every week of September 16th to remember the Chualar Bracero Tragedy of 1963, and this year, chose **Isidro Hernandez Tovar** to honor as part of this year's commemoration as he is the last surviving Bracero of the Chualar Bracero Tragedy.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors, on behalf of the County and all residents thereof, hereby honors and recognizes the life of **Isidro Hernandez Tovar**, and commends his resilience, perseverance, and devotion to family, and expresses its deepest gratitude for his lasting contributions as a Bracero worker and immigrant laborer whose story embodies the strength and spirit of the Latino community. We also honor and celebrate Isidro Hernandez Tovar as the last surviving Bracero of the Chualar Bracero Tragedy.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2025, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

I, Valerie Ralph, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Monterey, State of California, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of an original order of said Board of Supervisors duly made and entered in the minutes thereof of Minute Book _____ for the meeting on _____, 2025.

Dated:

Valerie Ralph, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of Monterey, State of California.

By _____
Deputy