

Mrs. Helen F. Chavez

P.O. Box 62 Keene, CA. 93531

February 18, 2013

Honorable Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

This letter is to ask you to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Fred Ross Sr. You have shared with us how Cesar Chavez inspired you to become a community organizer in Chicago in the 1980s, and how that began your career in public service. Fred Ross did for my husband what Cesar did for you: Fred changed my husband's life on that fateful day in the spring of 1952, when Fred held a house meeting at our little wood-frame home on Sharf Avenue in the Sal Si Puedes barrio of East San Jose.

That night after everyone left, Cesar told me that "the meeting was pure magic and I'm going to find how to do that magic. I'll find out, learn how to do it come what may and I won't stop until I learn from him."

Fred exposed Cesar to the magic of what can happen when poor and compliant people learn how to stand up for themselves and their community. Fred discovered, recruited and trained Cesar. As he said at Fred's memorial service in 1992, over 40 years Fred also became my husband's best friend.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Helen F. Chavez

cc: Julie Rodriguez