



Carson City Chapter
Reno/Sparks Chapter
Winnemucca Chapter
Yerington Chapter

I.B.E.W. Local 1245 Retirees' Clubs of Nevada

3860 Avocet Court, Reno NV 89508
775-722-2788

February 15, 2013

Dear President Obama,

We, the undersigned, are writing to ask you to posthumously award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to the legendary organizer, Fred Ross Sr.

Mr. Ross was a tireless organizer fighting for the dignity and the equality all people deserve. The seeds he planted are growing still today. Countless men and women who he touched and inspired during his many years of service continue his work. Even today we and others like us are achieving amazing things due to the groundwork he laid throughout his life. Over his career he educated, empowered and inspired people to speak out against injustices and work to right the wrongs.

Fred Ross Sr. dedicated his life to helping those who were systematically disenfranchised and subjected to countless indignities.

Starting in the 1930's and 1940's Fred Ross Sr. worked with the "Dust Bowl" immigrants in the farm camps of California. He worked with the Japanese American citizens imprisoned during World War. In the 1950s he fought segregation in southern California schools, skating rinks and movie theaters by organizing Civic Unity Leagues. He trained many workers during the "War on Poverty" and supported the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in the deep south. Most notably he worked with Cesar Chavez and the farm workers in central California.

Throughout his life and up to the time of his death at the age of 82 in 1992, Fred Ross Sr. was fearless in his commitment, drive and mission. He was often unrecognized for his work, but it resulted in many instances of changing our country to be a better place for each and every one of us.

Fred Ross Sr.'s legacy continues today through those he touched and inspired.

Recently his son, Fred Ross Jr., who worked and trained with his father, helped a small group of us retirees organize a campaign to demand our rights when a very successful, multi-billion dollar corporation here in Nevada acted unilaterally to nullify working agreements. The company disregarded

the collective bargaining agreements that were negotiated over 60 years. In 2010, the company declared they were passing on the rising cost of medical premiums to all retired workers. They broke their word, renegeing on a promise that in exchange for lower wages and other benefits, we would secure our healthcare coverage in retirement. This act was financially devastating to the retired workers who are on fixed pensions. We wanted to fight this injustice but didn't think we would be able to battle Goliath. Guided by Fred Ross Jr., we organized and fought back. Thanks to him, his experience, and the lessons learned from his father, our campaign was successful in bringing the corporation to the table and negotiating a settlement favorable to the retirees. This was amazing to us, and it taught us how a small group of retired workers slinging stones can prevail against the giant and right a grievous wrong. From what we learned from Fred Ross Jr., we have become more aware and prepared to address other issues that we may encounter. It is a shining example of how his father, Fred Ross Sr., continues to make a difference.

We urge you to recognize Fred Ross Sr. and posthumously confer on him the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his tireless work to right the injustices in our society. He was as an example to all of us. He showed us through his life's work, how ordinary individuals can bring about positive changes through their commitment and actions in our communities and our country.

Sincerely,

Signature	Signature
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Diane Hillier	
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ALL 12-45 DATED