

Date of Hearing: July 7, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Lori D. Wilson, Chair

ACR 97 (Rogers) – As Introduced June 11, 2025

SUBJECT: Charlie Barra Memorial Bridge

SUMMARY: Designates the Russian River Bridge and overhead on State Route 20, in the County of Mendocino, as the Charlie Barra Memorial Bridge and requests the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to determine the cost of appropriate signs showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources to cover that cost, to erect those signs.

EXISTING LAW: Assigns Caltrans the responsibility of operating and maintaining state highways. This includes the installation and maintenance of highway signs.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown, but the measure requests that Caltrans determine the cost of appropriate signage consistent with requirements for the state highway system, and only erect the appropriate signage upon receiving donations from non-state sources covering the cost.

COMMENTS: Charles “Charlie” Barra was born in Calpella, California, on December 12, 1926, to first-generation Italian immigrants Antonio Barra and Marie Rovera.

Charles attended grammar school locally, graduated from Ukiah High School as part of the class of 1946, and began his career as a successful grape grower who established and farmed over 500 acres of vineyards during his career.

Charles made significant contributions to the community throughout his lifetime, including serving in the United States Army from 1952 to 1954, helping to create the Redwood Valley County Water District in 1964, being appointed to the Mendocino County Planning Commission two times in 1965 and 1975, and being appointed to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors in 1968 by then Governor Ronald Reagan. Charles also created the St. Mary’s School Foundation of Ukiah, Inc., serving as its president for 21 years.

Charles made numerous contributions to the wine industry as an innovator of harvesting equipment and practices, pioneering overhead frost protection, and, in 1963, providing regional leadership as the founder and past president of the North Coast Grape Growers Association and board member for 41 years, where he lobbied for a variety of grower causes, including varietal percentage change in wines from 51% to 75%, the first appellation designation in the United States, and for pricing regulations that said a grower and winery had to agree on prices before grapes were crushed, certifying all of his vineyards as farmed organically by 1989, as well as owning and operating several wineries, including Redwood Valley Cellars, where he received numerous accolades in the industry for his wines and technical contributions.

Charles passed away on June 29, 2019, at 93 years of age, leaving behind Martha Barra, his wife of 39 years.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

County of Mendocino

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Aimee Anspach / TRANS. / (916) 319-2093