

Cha Cha, as he was fondly called, was the founder of the Young Lords, an organization created by Puerto Rican teens with the original purpose of providing a safe space in a changing Chicago.

Inspired by the writings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and Puerto Rican leader Pedro Albizu Campos, Cha Cha transformed the Young Lords from a street organization into a social justice group to fight for equality and freedom beyond Chicago. The movement was rooted in the self-determination of Puerto Ricans on the island and the mainland.

They organized actions against gentrification and displacement of Puerto Ricans in Lincoln Park, Chicago. They fought against police brutality and brought much needed basic services like education, childcare, and health services to our neighborhoods.

Cha Cha understood that the Latino and Black communities were facing similar struggles and forged an alliance with the Black Panthers to help underserved, low-income communities. Soon after, they partnered with a group of White, low-income residents called the Young Patriots, establishing Chicago's Rainbow Coalition.

Cha Cha's leadership united people of all backgrounds to fight collectively for a better future, and his legacy will live on for generations to come.

May he rest in power.

HONORING THE VILLAGE OF RIVERSIDE, ILLINOIS

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the village of Riverside, Illinois, which this year celebrates its 150th anniversary. Originally called Aux Plains, this charming village is known for its peaceful riverbanks and scenic forested areas.

On August 8, 1875, Riverside elected its first village president and trustees. Over the decades, it has become a thriving community, earning the title of: "Village in the Forest."

With its expansive green parkways, iconic gaslit street lanterns, and curvilinear streets, the village's charm is matched by its distinction as a national historic landmark, a title that it has proudly held since 1970 in part thanks to the numerous home designs by famous architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Olmsted & Vaux, Jenney, Sullivan, and Drummond.

We congratulate Riverside on this incredible milestone and look forward to celebrating all year long.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JUAN SOLIZ

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Juan Soliz who passed away in December of 2024. Juan was a public servant, educator, attorney, and an advocate for immigrants and indigenous peoples.

He served our community with passion and dedication. Born in Texas to Mexican parents, Juan's hard work took him to college and later law school in Washington State. He moved to Chicago in 1978 to join the Legal Assistance Foundation and never stopped working for the rights of immigrants and for immigration reform.

My friend, Juan, was the first Mexican American elected to the Illinois General Assembly in 1984. In 1987, he became the first Mexican American to represent Chicago's 25th Ward as alderman. He uplifted voter rights and brought Latino representation to Chicago's southwest side, and for that he will be remembered.

□ 1100

COMBATING PREVENTABLE AMPUTATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. McIVER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. McIVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to announce that on Friday I was proud to introduce the Amputation Reduction and Compassion, or ARC, Act to help combat preventable amputations brought on by peripheral artery disease, also known as PAD.

The ARC Act will save lives and reduce amputations by ensuring high-risk Medicare and Medicaid recipients have access to PAD screenings at no additional cost. Lowering costs will allow for better screening, earlier detection and treatment, and remove cost-prohibitive barriers to care.

This bill is very special to me, as it was first introduced by my predecessor, the late Representative Donald Payne, Jr. I am honored to ensure his work for better, more accessible care and his legacy are carried on with the ARC Act.

With the co-leadership of Representatives JONATHAN JACKSON and ROBIN KELLY, I am proud to introduce the ARC Act to save limbs, reduce patient costs, and save lives.

EVERY KID IS AT RISK

Mrs. McIVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to object to the dangerous bill, H.R. 28, the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2025, better known as the child predator empowerment act.

As the mom of an 8-year-old little girl who loves sports, who loves soccer, this bill is invasive to young girls but also dangerous to every kid. It puts every kid at risk. Every kid is at risk under this bill. I ask my colleagues to vote "no" on this bill.

RECOGNIZING TREMENDOUS ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STEVENS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. STEVENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the tremendous achievements of President Joe Biden, the 46th President of the United States.

While I could spend my time highlighting the nearly innumerable achievements of his administration, I rise to celebrate what this Nation is today because of President Biden's leadership, a nation on the rise.

President Biden and Vice President HARRIS inherited a nation in crisis; the greatest public health crisis in generations coupled with a threatening economic downturn with rising costs and high unemployment.

President Biden recognized this head-on. He saw what our Nation needed, and he acted with a jump-start of economic investment to get Americans working, moving, and innovating like never before. Alongside congressional leaders, he delivered for the American people.

President Biden delivered historic investments into our communities through the American Rescue Plan, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act, just to name a few.

These historic legislative packages unleashed hundreds of billions of dollars into our communities to get us moving and growing again.

The national statistics may highlight the breadth and depth of these historic investments, but no place speaks better to the generational change created by President Biden's leadership like my home State of Michigan with \$13 billion in infrastructure funding that has flowed through Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, there have been 62 new clean energy projects, and the most in the country have been announced in Michigan.

Over 400,000 new jobs have been created in Michigan, so many, in fact, that Detroit has been boasting its lowest levels of unemployment in three decades.

With the largest investment in the Great Lakes in decades, nearly all areas of concern in Michigan will be remediated, including two affecting my district: the Clinton River and the River Rouge. Combined with historic State-level investments, Michigan, the home of the Flint water crisis, is officially headed to a lead-free future with Detroit being lead-free by the end of the decade.

As home to the Big Three automakers, no place is leading the charge to electrify our future like we are in Michigan. We are manufacturing, we are growing, and we are innovating.

These are stories, these are numbers that represent the American worker. American workers have been able to achieve an economic reality, not just a political wish list, because of President Biden's dedication and leadership.

The needs of the American worker were heard, including seeing President Biden be the first President to join striking workers on a picket line in, of course, my home State of Michigan alongside the United Auto Workers.

It is the last week of President Biden's historic administration. President Biden is a true public servant who has stood up every single day of his career on behalf of the American people, who has reached out to the next generation to make sure that we are heard, to mentor individuals like myself, and who has been selfless in his

actions. We salute President Biden, and we recognize him for everything that he has done and committed to and the changes he has made.

GRATEFUL AND HONORED TO SERVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JOHNSON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to serve Texas' 32nd Congressional District in the United States House of Representatives for the 119th Congress.

As a Texas-educated attorney for over 30 years, I know what it takes to fight for those who need it most. Throughout my career, I have stood up for workers, those living with disabilities, students who are being taken advantage of by for-profit colleges, and so many of my fellow Texans who needed someone fighting alongside them.

I took those skills to the Texas State legislature where I fought for Medicaid expansion, a fair judicial court system, consumer protections, and for women to make their own healthcare decisions free from government intrusion.

When extremists decided to target the LGBTQ community in Texas, I raised my voice and helped kill hundreds of anti-LGBTQ bills that would have hurt the members of my community and their families.

As the trusted voice for Texas' 32nd Congressional District in Congress, I am ready to deliver real results for my neighbors. That means working to lower costs across the board; support and expand infrastructure for the fastest growing metroplex in the country; secure our southern border; and make healthcare safe, affordable, and reliable for all Americans.

My home State of Texas plays a huge role in powering our Nation and our world. We have a massive economy that supports millions of jobs, and we are Mexico's largest trading partner.

Texas also has the largest border with our neighbor to the south, and it will be up to Texas and Texas Democrats to provide meaningful solutions to the problems that we face. I am ready to lead on these important issues.

I am thrilled I will be serving on three committees this Congress that will help me deliver these results to make life better for Texas' businesses, middle-class families, and our seniors.

On the House Homeland Security Committee and House Foreign Affairs Committee, I will work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to keep our Nation safe and to strengthen our alliances around the world.

On the House Administration Committee, I will work tirelessly to protect the people's right to vote and to make sure this institution, the people's House, functions in a way that is better for Texans and all of our Nation's citizens.

Let me be clear: The work begins right now.

In Congress, I am committed to rising above the division and coming up with bipartisan solutions to solve our Nation's biggest problems. I will work with anyone, Democrat or Republican, who is willing to come together, put partisanship aside, and to make life better for the people that we all serve.

I want my constituents to know how grateful I am to have this opportunity, and I wake up every day with the mission and the purpose to serve them in this Chamber. I thank them so much, and I want them to know that I will always have their back here in the United States Congress.

CALIFORNIA FIRES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, we are all watching the ferocious Palisades, Eaton, Altadena, and Hurst fires expand along California's beautiful Coast. I can recall my many trips there. Surely we all love the Tournament of Roses Parade and the magic of Hollywood.

Our hearts go out today and forever to come to the thousands of displaced people, the brave, unrelenting fire and rescue crews, and the public officials trying to bring order in the midst of chaos.

Let me share. Having practiced as a city and regional planner long before my election to Congress, I was awestruck when I visited there at the large number of homes built high on forested mountainsides with many sizeable mansions at their very peaks.

In fact, most recently, as ranking Democrat on the House Appropriations Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Subcommittee, I was flown on an extensive tour over Los Angeles by a U.S. Army Corps helicopter to evaluate freshwater challenges in that drought-prone region.

As the granddaughter of a forester, experience led me to question how such densely developed communities with housing perched on forested ascending hillsides could be evacuated in the event of emergency. My stomach became queasy at the thought, and my premonition is now being affirmed.

Last fall, I called for Congress to return to Washington to fully fund FEMA and the Small Business Administration to assist with disaster relief efforts. It took until late December to approve \$28 billion in funding, well below the \$40 billion the Biden administration requested, and now this horror has launched.

Statistics show in Canada and the United States, whether it is along our Pacific Coast, in Vancouver, or Quebec, historic precious forests are burning to the ground during this era of prolonged drought.

One estimate indicates the recent annual tree loss just in Canada equates to their forests' lost capacity to absorb the annual carbon dioxide from all jet aviation fuel spewed into the atmos-

phere across our globe. This chart attests to that.

Just a few years ago due to major forest fires in Quebec, our southern Great Lakes region in my home State of Ohio was covered with an eerie, hazy, atmospheric soot blowing south across the border with Canada. What an out-of-body occurrence never before encountered where we live. My own rhododendron plants were smothered by it.

Long ago, I learned in a forestry class there is only one way to regenerate a forest: burning it to the ground. Thus, allowing massive communities to be built in forests is always dangerous.

When I was born, California's population numbered about 10 million people. Today, it has quadrupled to over 42.5 million people, and Los Angeles County's dense population alone now numbers over 10 million people, larger than 80 percent of the States in our Union. California's population is projected to reach 60 million people by 2050, and that is six times its population in 1950.

Freshwater is running out.

Challenges to life on a changing continent and world are daunting, and we must all ask tough questions about how to build and rebuild places that are livable and survivable.

□ 1115

It will take years to salvage the Los Angeles neighborhoods, and some will never be rebuilt. Meanwhile, other regions across our Nation can welcome fire refugees.

The growing freshwater fights between communities and States that attend to life in the West are hastening. More people are demanding more freshwater when that is a physical impossibility as aquifers run dry.

There is only so much freshwater. If one looks at places like the Great Lakes, we say: How does our Nation best invest in sustainable water and energy systems for the coming century and beyond?

We must think forward, not backward. America must have a more comprehensive approach to build forward sustainable communities.

Step one is to rescue the West, but there must be attention to resettling in freshwater regions that are more sustainable.

For example, advancing freshwater settlement for our Great Lakes region will require standing up the Great Lakes Authority and infusing it with the ability to relieve bonded indebtedness of struggling freshwater communities. They must be able to financially reinvest to upgrade their freshwater systems in places like Flint, Detroit, Toledo, Cleveland, Youngstown, Milwaukee, Kenosha, Chicago, and so many more. Freshwater is life.

The old expression, "Go west or south, young man," still applies, but our planet is teaching us there are limits to what the Earth can sustain.

Living in the past is not an option. Onward, America, together.