



美洲同源總會

Chinese American Citizens Alliance

~ National ~

1044 Stockton Street, San Francisco, California 94108 • Telephone/Fax (415)829-9332

National Lodge
ESTABLISHED 1895

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: info@cacanational.org

C.A.C.A. Mourns the Passing of Civil Rights Giant John Lewis

San Francisco, July 20, 2020 — The Chinese American Citizens Alliance (C.A.C.A.) mourns the passing of United States Representative John Lewis, of Georgia, who was born the child of sharecroppers and later rose to leadership in the nonviolence struggle for racial equality and as a Congressional representative in Georgia since 1986. Congressman Lewis passed away on Friday, July 17. He was 80. At the time of his death he was receiving treatment for Stage 4 pancreatic cancer, which he announced last year on December 29.

Born February 21, 1940, in rural Alabama in the segregated South, Mr. Lewis was inspired to join the Civil Rights Movement by the activism surrounding the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the words of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., which he heard on radio broadcasts. While at Fisk University in Nashville, he organized sit-in demonstrations at segregated lunch counters. He participated in the Freedom Rides, which challenged segregation at interstate bus terminals across the South. Mr. Lewis risked his life on those rides many times by simply sitting in seats reserved for white patrons. He also was beaten severely by angry mobs and arrested by police for challenging the injustice of Jim Crow segregation in the South.

By 1963, Mr. Lewis had become regarded as one of the Big Six leaders of the Civil Rights Movement*. He was an architect of and a keynote speaker at the historic March on Washington, D.C. in August 1963. He became Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), largely responsible for organizing student activism in the Movement, including sit-ins and other activities.

John Lewis coordinated one of the most seminal moments of the Civil Rights Movement: the crossing of the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, on March 7, 1965. Six hundred protesters march from Selma to Montgomery to demonstrate the need for voting rights in the state. The marchers were attacked by Alabama state troopers in a brutal confrontation that became known as “Bloody Sunday.” Press coverage sparked public outrage over the violence against peaceful protesters, which helped secure passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Elected to Congress representing the Georgia’s 5th Congressional District, Mr. Lewis served for more than three decades and was regarded by his House colleagues as “the conscience of the Congress.” In 2011, President Barack Obama bestowed Representative Lewis the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor.



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“John Lewis is a towering figure in the Civil Rights Movement. He was present at almost all of the turning points in the decades-long struggle for equality and justice. He helped write the playbook for nonviolent civil disobedience, despite the arrests, the harassment and beatings,” says C.A.C.A. National President Melanie Chan. “The Chinese American Citizens Alliance sends its condolences to Mr. Lewis’ family and constituents of the 5th Congressional District.”

* The Big Six were the leaders of prominent civil rights organizations: Martin Luther King Jr., James Farmer, John Lewis, A. Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins and Whitney Young. Mr. Lewis was the youngest and last remaining of the Big Six before his death on July 17, 2020.

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1044 Stockton St.
San Francisco, CA.

Web: www.CACAnational.org
Chinese American Citizens Alliance

The Chinese American Citizens Alliance, established in 1895, is among the oldest civil rights organizations in the United States. Headquartered in San Francisco with chapter/lodges in Albuquerque (NM), Boston (MA), Chicago (IL), Greater San Gabriel Valley (CA), Greater New York (NY), Houston (TX), Las Vegas (NV), Los Angeles (CA), Mississippi, Oakland (CA), Orange County (CA), Peninsula (CA), Portland (OR), Phoenix (AZ), Sacramento (CA), Salinas (CA), San Antonio (TX), San Francisco (CA), Seattle (WA) and Washington, D.C., the Alliance addresses issues regarding voter education, political participation, racial discrimination and hate crimes, and supports youth leadership training programs and equal employment opportunities for all Chinese Americans.