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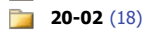
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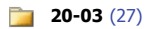

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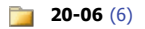
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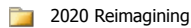
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The Congressional Black Caucus Mourns the Loss of Congressman John Lewis

The Congressional Black Caucus [BlackCaucusDigital@gmail.com]

Sent: Saturday, July 18, 2020 12:17 AM

To: Steve Johnston

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CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

[July 17, 2020](#)

[The CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS MOURNS THE LOSS OF CONGRESSMAN JOHN LEWIS](#)

[The Congressional Black Caucus released the following statement on the passing of House Ways and Means Oversight Subcommittee Chairman and Congressional Black Caucus Member, Congressman John R. Lewis \(GA-05\):](#)

[The world has lost a legend; the civil rights movement has lost an icon, the City of Atlanta has lost one of its most fearless leaders, and the Congressional Black Caucus has lost our longest serving member. The Congressional Black Caucus is known as the Conscience of the Congress. John Lewis was known as the conscience of our caucus. A fighter for justice until the end, Mr. Lewis recently visited Black Lives Matter Plaza in Washington DC. His mere presence encouraged a new generation of activist to “speak up and speak out” and get into “good trouble” to continue bending the arc toward justice and freedom.](#)

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[The City of Atlanta has lost one of its most fearless leaders. Congressman John Lewis spent his life fighting racism and injustice wherever he confronted it, from boycotts, sit-ins, and other protests in the streets, to championing bold, progressive policies in Congress. Mr. Lewis was born and raised in Troy, Alabama, a segregated town of the Deep South. At an early age, he was inspired by the non-violent activism of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his leadership of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. This passion drove Mr. Lewis to dedicate himself and his life to the Civil Rights Movement.](#)

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[As a student at Fisk University, Mr. Lewis was a part of the Nashville Student Movement and helped organize sit-ins that eventually led to the desegregation of the lunch counters in Downtown Nashville. In 1961, he became one of the 13 original Freedom Riders, an integrated group determined to ride from Washington, DC to New Orleans. In 1963, he became the Chair of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee \(SNCC\), an organization he helped form.](#)

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[As Chair of SNCC, John Lewis was one of the “Big 6” leaders of the historical March on Washington on August, 28, 1963, and was the youngest speaker to address the hundreds of thousands marching for jobs and freedom that day. He also played a key role in the marches from Selma to Montgomery, a campaign against the blatant voter suppression of Black citizens. He joined Hosea Williams and hundreds of civil rights marchers to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge on “Bloody Sunday” and suffered](#)

[a fractured skull that day for the right of Black people to register and vote.](#)

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[For 34 years, Mr. Lewis served Georgia's 5th district and our country with the same burning desire to ensure America's promises were accessible to all. He never hesitated to tell the truth about this nation's history and injustices. In his very first Congress, John Lewis introduced a bill to create an African American history museum in Washington, DC, but the bill was blocked by Senator Jesse Helms for 15 years. But Mr. Lewis persisted, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture opened in 2016 and is by far the most popular museum on the National Mall.](#)

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[In 2012, John Lewis unveiled a marker in Emancipation Hall commemorating the contributions of enslaved Americans to the construction of the United States Capitol. The marker was the result of literally a decade of work by a special task force led by Mr. Lewis after a bill was found in the National Archives documenting payment for slaves to build the Capitol. Congressman Lewis commented at the unveiling:](#)

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["When I walk through Statuary Hall, it means a great deal to me to know that the unusual grey marble columns were likely hewn and polished by slaves in Maryland. They quarried the stone in Maryland and sailed ships or barges many miles down the Potomac River weighed down by heavy marble columns to bring them to DC. Somehow, they carried them several miles through the streets perhaps using wagons and mules or horses, and then hoisted them up so they are standing as we see them today in the Capitol. The bronze statue sitting on top of the Capitol dome also involved the contribution of slaves. These men and woman played a powerful role in our history and that must not be forgotten."](#)

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[Legislatively, Mr. Lewis championed the Voter Empowerment Act, which would modernize registration and voting in America and increase access to the ballot. He was also an ardent advocate for immigrants, the LGBTQ community, and affordable health care for all. As Chair of the Oversight Subcommittee on the House Ways and Means Committee, Mr. Lewis helped ensure the efficient implementation of laws related to tax, trade, health, Human Resources, and Social Security. He examined how the tax code subsidizes hate groups and the public health impact of gun violence. Most recently, Mr. Lewis pressed the Trump Administration to quickly deliver the stimulus checks that Congress provided in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.](#)

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[Mr. Lewis continued his practice of nonviolent protest, community organizing, and grassroots activism throughout his tenure in Congress. In 2011, President Barack Obama awarded Mr. Lewis the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the United States of America. Following the Pulse Nightclub shooting in 2016, John Lewis led Democrats in a 26-hour sit-in on the House floor to demand that the body debate gun control measures. Every year, he led a pilgrimage to Selma to commemorate the march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Even his recent health challenges could not keep him from commemorating the 55th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday" this year.](#)

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[Despite more than 40 arrests, brutal attacks, and physical injuries, Mr. Lewis remained devoted to the philosophy of nonviolence in his fight for justice and equality, even to this day, as America faces another reckoning with racism and hundreds of thousands around the world spark a modern-day civil rights movement against police brutality and racial injustice. He taught us to keep our eye on the prize, and that lesson is more crucial than ever. We will keep our eye on the prize of social justice, voting rights, quality education, affordable health care, and economic empowerment for every soul.](#)

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[The entire Congressional Black Caucus extends our condolences to Mr. Lewis' family, friends, staff, and the city of Atlanta.](#)

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