

Michael passed away on June 14, 2015, after an 11-year battle against ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

When Michael was diagnosed with ALS in 2004, he was determined not to let the disease control his life. He found hope in his family, friends, and faith. This hope encouraged him to become an advocate for the 30,000 other Americans who live with ALS.

Mike encouraged others and their families to be strong and resilient in the face of illness. His upbeat and optimistic personality was a constant reminder to take advantage of every opportunity that life hands us. He was a frequent visitor to my office. He was a tireless self-advocate who remained upbeat, compassionate, and personable—even in the face of a horribly debilitating disease.

Mr. Speaker, we can all learn from Michael Sullivan's exemplary service, selflessness, and love. He will be greatly missed. His friends and family are blessed to have known such an honorable man. In the words of Michael: "One day together, we can create a world without ALS."

PROTECTING SENIORS' ACCESS TO MEDICARE ACT OF 2015

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the House showed leadership tonight in passing H.R. 1190, Protecting Seniors' Access to Medicare Act of 2015.

The IPAB board was going to be very problematic for seniors, and H.R. 1190 is going to be a very important tool in correcting the wrongs of the Affordable Care Act and preserving access to health care. It would indeed have had an unelected board making Medicare spending decisions which, again, would be shifting power to Washington, D.C., and away from that all-important doctor-patient relationship, where it really should be.

We want to talk about savings in the medical field—and we need to—because not nearly enough is done, whether it was in the Affordable Care Act or other conversations around D.C. We need to talk about and work on actually achieving cost cutting, reduction of unnecessary costs delivering health care, litigation, and the time it takes to bring miracle pharmaceuticals to markets.

These are the kinds of things that we need to be doing to make health care more affordable and, indeed, more accessible.

CALIFORNIA DROUGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I am not at all sure it is going to be that controversial, but I was just looking outside the Capitol before I came in to make this presentation, and it is raining. It is a downpour. For those of us from California, it has been a long time since we have seen a downpour.

The Golden State, the seventh largest economy in the world and home to over 35 million people, is in the throes of a historic drought. This is the fourth year, and it is a world of hurt in California.

The economy is moving along. We are not complaining about the economy. Many parts of it are moving along. But for everyone in the State of California, whether you are in the far north up near Mount Shasta or way down here in the San Diego area, we are hurting.

There is a lot of talk. Water restrictions are taking place in every city, whether you are on the coast, up in the north, or in the far south at Laguna Beach. Wherever you happen to be in the State of California, these restrictions are tightening up on the ability of communities to prosper, grow, and keep their lawns green, but more important in some communities, to even live there.

In some parts of the Central Valley, down here in the Fresno area, there are communities that are out of water. Communities of 3,000, 5,000, maybe even 10,000 people, have virtually no water at all.

This is a problem today. As we look to the future, we are going to see the State's economy and population grow and the demand for water will ever increase, unless we do something. What we must do is develop a water plan for all of California.

Unfortunately, what we do most of the time in California is fight over water. There is the famous saying from Mark Twain: "Whiskey is for drinking. Water is for fighting over."

And so it has been ever since my great-great-grandfather came to California in the early days of the Gold Rush up here in the mother lode region. You couldn't mine without water. And fighting over that water was the order of the day, and it is today.

So as this entire State and much of the Southwest region—Nevada, southern Oregon, Utah, New Mexico, and even the western parts of Texas—suffer through this historic drought, we have taken to fighting in California. And I want to spend a few moments this evening talking about what we must do immediately and then a long-term solution for the State of California.

Immediate, we are going to have to seek help. The State of California is

using some bond money from past bond acts and some bond money from the historic passage of Proposition 1 last November to immediately try to fix problems that exist in those communities without water. And so that money will begin to flow to those communities, wherever they happen to be.

There are a couple up here in the Sacramento Valley and further down in the San Joaquin Valley. The deserts have always been without water, so this is not new to them, although it is more extreme.

It is good that the bond act can provide immediate relief, but the rest of the short-term solutions will come from Washington. I want to congratulate and thank the administration for providing \$110 million of money for a variety of projects. Some of those projects are to dig deeper wells for those communities without water, to find ways to improve the conservation immediately, and to set about other programs that are short-term in nature—all to the good. And that should continue.

In the days ahead, we are going to take up the appropriations bill for water. In that appropriations bill, we should direct the administration to do what it is doing—and to continue doing it through this drought—and that is to focus all of those resources on the immediate drought that is occurring.

Whether it is aid for ranchers and farmers or cities, it makes no difference. It is broad and it needs to be done, and it should line up with Proposition 1 of the last November ballot. That is both short-term and long-term. So the Federal Government supports those projects that would be funded under that \$7 billion bond act that the citizens of California voted for in an overwhelming majority.

But I would also like to talk about the long-term here. Because droughts will come and go, and we must be prepared not only in California, but across the West.

For many years, the Department of Water Resources in California has looked at the problem and has made many, many suggestions; but until about 4 years ago, those suggestions were never put together in a comprehensive plan.

I am familiar with this. I am a water warrior in California. I have represented this part of California for nearly 40 years, the great Central Valley of California. I will put up another map so you can get a better look at it.

So the plans that were put together by the California Department of Water Resources deal with the Sacramento River, which flows south, and the San Joaquin River, which flows north from the Fresno area. This is way beyond Sacramento. Mount Shasta and Oregon, it is way up there.

These are the two great rivers of California, together with the Colorado, which is way to the south. It flows into an area here which is called the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. This is the