

Stephanie Chang (張理)

Stephanie Chang (張理 Chang Li) was born in 1983 in Detroit, Michigan. She received her B.A. in Psychology with a minor in Asian Pacific Islander American Studies from the University of Michigan in 2005. Later, she returned to the University of Michigan to earn an M.A. in Public Policy and another M.A. in Social Work in 2014. After receiving her bachelor's, she worked as a field organizer for a union. In 2006, she worked with One United Michigan to defeat an anti-affirmative action initiative, and though they ultimately lost, she was inspired to stay in Michigan and give back to the community she grew up in. She was co-founder and served as president for the Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote-Michigan (APIA Vote-Michigan), a nonpartisan non-profit that was created to bring justice and equity to the Asian American community.



In 2013, Chang's predecessor, Rashida Tlaib finally convinced her to run for a seat in the Michigan House of Representatives. During her campaign, Chang personally walked through her district to talk to the voters in her community. She later discovered that she had knocked on every door of her district twice. Elected in 2014 with nearly 94% of the vote, she took office in 2015 as the first female Asian-American representative in her State Legislature. She was re-elected in 2016 with 93% of the vote. She served as chair for the Progressive Women's Caucus, as well as on the leadership team for the House Democratic Caucus and co-founded the Asian Pacific American Legislative Caucus. In 2018, she was elected to the Michigan Senate, becoming the first Asian-American woman and the first Taiwanese American to serve in the Michigan Senate. After her election to the State Senate, she was elected Minority Floor Leader, becoming the first woman of color to be elected to a leadership position in Michigan's State Senate.

Since entering public service, Chang has introduced and supported bills on education, criminal justice reforms, environmental protection, immigration, health care, women's rights, labor rights, refugee rights, and senior citizen's rights. She has also worked to promote political involvement among underrepresented and marginalized groups, such as young voters and people of color. In 2018, T.A. Archives selected her as an Outstanding Taiwanese American.

References:

T.A. Archives Biography: <http://taiwaneseamericanhistory.org/blog/whos-stephanie-chang/>

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