



# The Assembly State of New York



# Proclamation

- Whereas,** Carlos “Chino” Garcia was born in Río Piedras, Puerto Rico, the son of Carlos and Antonia who had 5 children, emigrated to New York City East Harlem in 1951, then Baruch Houses in the Lower East Side. He drew political inspiration from listening to soapbox speakers at Union Square. Chino attended PS 11, PS 188, in high school he studied drafting. Chino became part of a gang, the Assassins for protection, exhibiting his resourcefulness and natural leadership abilities he became its leader, eventually turning their energies to positive community development activities; and
- Whereas,** when President Johnson's Great Society programs and the Office of Economic Opportunity offered funding to support positive youth efforts, they founded the “The Real Great Society.” Chino became a member of the Whitehouse Committee on Youth. The Real Great Society was committed to helping the community, and they formed a nonprofit dedicated to the arts. They called it CHARAS, using the first initials of each of the founders; and
- Whereas,** CHARAS was at the leading edge of the urban green movement, gardening, alternative energy and recycling, and joining the Sweat Equity movement renovating abandoned buildings. The buildings blossomed with art reflecting the people's struggles and hopes, they helped build the first homestead buildings. In 1977, CHARAS helped take possession of and began to restore the abandoned old PS 64, naming it El Bohio. Investing thousands of hours of sweat-equity labor, and funding from city, state, national governments, and foundations, CHARAS became the heart and soul of the Lower East Side; and
- Whereas,** CHARAS ran programs in El Bohio for more than twenty years reflecting the cultural diversity of the historic Lower East Side people it served. They produced notable theater, art exhibitions, workshops, incubated individual artists, taught community organizing, fundraising, social service activities, cultural and community family celebrations. They were positive role models and their after-school and vocational programming kept kids off the street; and
- Whereas,** CHARAS held annual Día Del Los Tres Reyes Celebration, entertainment and gifts for over one thousand children over the years. When CHARAS attempted to purchase El Bohio in the late 1990s, the city did not keep its good-faith promise to negotiate, put the building up for auction and sold it to a developer. During Christmas in 2001, CHARAS and its supporters were evicted; and
- Whereas,** Chino is the proud father of Taina Garcia-Jester, and grandfather of Kailo and Mia Joy. Much of his work was to provide a better future for his children and those of his community. Chino has served on dozens of boards, among them Tu Casa Studio, Howl Festival, Cooper Square Community Development Committee, Little Missionaries Day Care, Picture the Homeless, and The Seward Park Area Redevelopment Coalition (SPARC), and advised innumerable others; now, therefore, be it
- Proclaimed,** That as a member of the New York State Assembly I am proud to honor

**Carlos “Chino” Garcia**

Dated: October 5, 2019

In Witness Whereof, I Have Hereunto

Set My Hand and Signature

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**Harvey Epstein**

New York State Assembly

74<sup>th</sup> District