

NATIVE AMERICAN MEMORIAL AMENDMENTS ACT

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, last night the Senate passed the Native American Memorial Amendments Act of 2013. The bill now heads to the President for his signature. I introduced the Native American Memorial Amendments Act in May. I have worked with Representative MULLIN since he introduced an identical bill in the House in June.

This bill is needed to facilitate construction of a long-awaited Native American Veterans' Memorial on the National Mall. This memorial has languished for almost 20 years since the passage of the original Native American Veterans' Memorial Establishment Act. This legislation builds off of the great work of Senator MCCAIN, who introduced the initial bill to authorize the Native American Veterans' Memorial, and Senator INOUE, who as the Indian Affairs Committee chairman worked to enact the law in 1994.

My bill also continues Senator AKAKA's great legislative effort to fulfill the promise of this memorial. Native Americans, including Native Hawaiians, Alaska Natives, and American Indians, serve and have always served at a higher rate in the Armed Forces than any other group of Americans per capita.

In every conflict since the Revolutionary War, Native Americans have answered the call to serve and defend our country. I introduced my bill so our Nation can recognize Native Americans' service and patriotism with a fitting memorial. A memorial to Native veterans will make sure future generations learn about the sacrifices Native Americans have made in service to our Nation.

It will commemorate their exceptional commitment to the principles of freedom and democracy. Last month, Congress awarded its highest honor, the Congressional Gold Medal, to the American Indians we know as code talkers. These brave men played a critical, and for too long unacknowledged, role in both World Wars. The celebration of our legendary code talkers in Emancipation Hall at the U.S. Capitol was a historic and proud moment.

But it is regrettable that most of the 216 honored did not live to see their heroic contributions acknowledged. Congress was decades late in recognizing the Native American code talker's work when we needed them most. We cannot make that mistake again. I believe now is the perfect time to move forward on a lasting tribute to all Native veterans, including the extraordinary contribution of Native Hawaiians.

My home State of Hawaii is second to none when it comes to patriotism, public service, and personal sacrifice. The heroic deeds of Anthony T. Kaho'ohanohano from Wailuku, Maui, prove just how true this is. He joined the Army to fight in combat in the Korean war.

He was assigned to Company H, 17th Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. Private First Class Kaho'ohanohano displayed extraordinary heroism near Chopra-Ri, Korea, on September 1, 1951. Due to the enemy's overwhelming numbers, troops were forced to execute a limited withdrawal. As the men fell back, Kaho'ohanohano ordered his squad to take up more defensible positions. He provided cover fire for them.

Although painfully wounded in the shoulder during the initial enemy assault, he gathered a supply of grenades and ammunition and returned to his original position to face the enemy alone. Kaho'ohanohano delivered deadly, accurate fire onto the advancing enemy. After going through all of his ammunition, he engaged the enemy in hand-to-hand combat until he paid the ultimate price fighting to protect his fellow soldiers.

President Obama awarded U.S. Army Private First Class Kaho'ohanohano the Presidential Medal of Honor, our Nation's highest military honor, posthumously. Private First Class Kaho'ohanohano, the thousands of Native Hawaiians, and Native Americans who have served our country with such honor deserve a memorial on the National Mall.

My Native American Memorial Amendments Act that passed last night will allow for a privately funded memorial to be located on grounds under the jurisdiction of the National Museum of the American Indian. The museum will have the much needed flexibility to raise funds and take on a more active role in planning and construction.

The Native American Memorial Amendments Act of 2013 was endorsed by the National Congress of the American Indians, Alaska Federation of Natives, the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, the largest three Native American membership organizations in the country. The National Museum of the American Indian and the National Park Service are in agreement as well.

I wish to thank the strong support of the bipartisan cosponsors of this bill: Senators BARRASSO, BEGICH, HEITKAMP, INHOFE, MURKOWSKI, TESTER, THUNE, and WYDEN. I also wish to thank especially chairwoman MARIA CANTWELL for her work to ensure the passage of this bill. It is long past time for our Nation to honor the uncommon contributions of Native Hawaiians, Native Alaskans and American Indians and other Native veterans. These brave men and women have served during war and peace to preserve our freedoms in remarkable high numbers. The valor of our Native American veterans, their dedication to duty and remarkable record of military service must forever be remembered. This memorial will do just that.

I yield the floor.

BIPARTISAN BUDGET RESOLUTION

PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES

Mr. BAUCUS. Madam President, I come to the floor today with my friend Chairman WYDEN to express support for extending natural resource programs that are critical to communities across the country. This week the Senate passed a bipartisan budget resolution. In January we will return to consider legislation to fund the government for the rest of the fiscal year.

This past October, Congress was able to extend critical payments to forested counties under the Secure Rural Schools, SRS, program for 1-year in a bipartisan fashion. Irrespective of the appropriations bill that we may take up in January, we now need to do the same for counties eligible for payments under the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program, or PILT. PILT is a permanently authorized program created in 1976 that since 2008 has received direct spending. It is an essential source of funding for local governments that cannot collect taxes from Federal land within their borders.

A long-term solution to provide stable direct funding for PILT and other natural resource programs that buttress rural economies, like SRS and the Land and Water Conservation Fund, is our common goal. In the meantime, we remain committed to extending direct spending on PILT and look forward to finding an opportunity to do so in the first half of 2014. Does the distinguished senator from Oregon wish to express himself on these points?

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I wish to associate myself with the comment of my friend from Montana and affirm that I too share the commitments he described. These payments extend a vital lifeline to counties across America, many of which are perched on the edge of financial disaster. Securing that funding has been a top priority for me this Congress. I am pleased that Congress found a way to continue its commitment to the Secure Rural Schools Program thanks to the helium bill that I worked on with colleagues in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. There is still work to do for the 1,850 PILT-eligible counties, and I look forward to working with the majority leader and Chairman BAUCUS—who are both longtime champions of PILT—and other supportive colleagues to find a short-term extension and also a long-term solution for these communities.

FARM BILL CONFERENCE

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, while the days are limited before the end of 2013, the Farm Bill Conference Committee presses on, working together in a bipartisan fashion to resolve differences and to take the steps necessary to enact a comprehensive and balanced farm bill. Under the leadership of Chairwoman STABENOW and