

recognized as the leading advocate of veterans in Congress, responsible for legislation to compensate veterans and their families for the effects of Agent Orange, help Persian Gulf and women veterans, and those now returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. The veterans' service organizations have honored Lane with their highest awards.

Lane Evans has always been a leader in the fight for universal health care. Although Parkinson's disease has forced him to end his productive service in the House, he always acknowledges how fortunate he is to be able to afford the best care, while so many Americans are not. He has become an advocate for expanding funding for research into the cure for Parkinson's and many other diseases that might benefit from government-funded embryonic stem cell research.

When Lane Evans retired from the House of Representatives last year, Senator DURBIN said the following: "There are two kinds of courage in this world. There is physical courage, which is rare. Then there is even a rarer commodity, moral courage. Once in a great while you find someone who has both. Lane Evans is that person." I could not agree with Senator DURBIN more.

I miss Lane Evans' presence in the Halls of Congress on a day-to-day basis. However, my sadness is easily deflected by Lane's legacy that will ever be reflected in the improved lives of the veterans of the United States and all the working families who will continue to benefit from his outstanding service.

I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 521.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO DESIGNATE THE THIRD FLOOR OF THE ELLIS ISLAND IMMIGRATION MUSEUM AS THE "BOB HOPE MEMORIAL LIBRARY"

**HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 31, 2007*

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to encourage my colleagues' strong support of legislation that I have introduced to designate the third floor library of the Ellis Island Immigration Museum as the "Bob Hope Memorial Library." I would also like to thank Representative GALLEGLY for his assistance with this bill. I believe that it is important to honor Bob Hope, an American Citizen, who immigrated through Ellis Island and who contributed so greatly to the American people and culture.

Most Americans remember Bob Hope for his work in the entertainment business as a comedian, actor, dancer, and singer as well as his work with American troops abroad. But, what few know is that Bob Hope was an immigrant from England. He is sometimes even referred to as America's most famous immigrant, whose life epitomizes the "American Dream." After a long period of restoration, Ellis Island was turned into a museum in 1990 with the purpose for people to come and remember the 16 million immigrants who passed through Ellis Island from 1892–1954 to pursue the American Dream. Bob Hope embodies that American Dream which so many immigrants

sought and I believe that naming the library after this great American is a fitting tribute.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL TO PROVIDE PERMANENT FUNDING FOR THE PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES (PILT) PROGRAM

**HON. MARK UDALL**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 31, 2007*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, together with my Colorado colleague, Representative JOHN SALAZAR, I am again introducing legislation to provide permanent funding for two programs that are very important to counties and other local units of government in Colorado and many other States.

Our bill is identical to one we introduced in the 109th Congress. Under the bill, the full amounts authorized under both the payments in lieu of taxes, PILT, program and the refuge revenue sharing program would be made available to the Secretary of the Interior annually, for distribution to eligible local governments in accordance with those programs.

This would eliminate the requirement for annual appropriations for PILT and refuge revenue sharing purposes and would shield them against the kind of political short-sightedness demonstrated in the presidential budget that has repeatedly failed to request full funding for PILT and has even proposed cuts from amounts Congress has previously provided.

While both programs are significant, PILT is particularly important for counties in Colorado and other States that include large expanses of Federal lands. In 2006, for example, counties in Colorado received more than \$17.4 million out of a total of more than \$232 million distributed nationwide.

Congress created the PILT program in response to a recommendation of the Public Land Law Review Commission, chaired by Representative Wayne N. Aspinall, who represented what was then Colorado's Fourth Congressional District. It reflected a recognition that a system of payments based on acreage was more equitable and reliable than one tied to management decisions such as timber harvests or other uses.

Counties use their PILT payments for a wide variety of purposes, including some—such as law enforcement, fire fighting, and search and rescue—that are directly related to the Federal lands within their boundaries and the people who use those lands.

For nearly two decades after the program was established, PILT funding remained level but the value of PILT payments was eroded by inflation. In 1995, Congress amended the law to raise the authorization level. However, since 1995, no budget request—from either President Clinton or President Bush—has requested more than two-thirds of the amount authorized by the PILT Act. As a result, the burden on county taxpayers has not been reduced to the extent that Congress intended when it passed the 1995 legislation. Our bill would ensure full implementation of that legislation.

HONORING HENRY M. THOMAS III

**HON. RICHARD E. NEAL**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 31, 2007*

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday night, January 24, 2007, the University of Massachusetts presented Henry M. Thomas III of Springfield, MA, with its Distinguished Service Award. This award recognizes the "demonstrated leadership" and "exemplary accomplishments" of an individual, and I can think of no one more worthy than my friend Henry Thomas.

Henry Thomas is a life-long friend of mine and I would like to extend at this time my heartfelt congratulations to him upon receiving this prestigious honor. I would like to include in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD today a history of Henry Thomas's accomplishments and dedication to the city of Springfield, social activism and education. Congratulations Henry on an award that is well-deserved.

DISTINGUISHED ACHIEVEMENT AWARD PRESENTED TO HENRY M. THOMAS III, JANUARY 24, 2007.

No one in our time has made greater civic contributions to western Massachusetts than Henry M. Thomas III, or shown greater courage and resolve in doing so. His record of achievement during the past three and a half decades has been dazzling in its depth and diversity.

Thomas is president and chief executive officer of the Urban League of Springfield Inc., which he joined in 1971 as youth and education director. The Urban League serves the African American community by promoting through advocacy and services the academic and social development and the economic self-sufficiency of young people and families. It also fosters racial inclusion and social justice.

Thomas showed an early aptitude for leadership. Within 4 years he was promoted to director of voter registration and education at the Springfield Urban League, and then to deputy director. In 1975, when only 25 years old, he was named president and CEO, the youngest person ever so appointed in an Urban League affiliate. He is a past president of the National Urban League Executives and served for 2 years as vice president for youth development at the New York office of the National Urban League, developing infrastructure to support inner-city youth.

Many other institutions and organizations have been touched by Thomas's energetic idealism and executive skill. As the first African American chairman of the Springfield Fire Commission from 1985 to 1998, he demonstrated a courageous willingness to challenge a rule that forbade fire department applicants from having an arrest record, as opposed to a conviction—this at a time when blacks and Latinos were frequently arrested on spurious grounds. Ten years later, as the first black chairman of the Springfield Police Commission, Thomas received death threats after granting three African Americans promotions to sergeant.

In January 2006, Governor Mitt Romney appointed Thomas vice chairman of the Massachusetts Board of Education, on which he had served since 2001. Thomas was also recently appointed to the transition team of Governor Deval Patrick.

Camp Atwater in North Brookfield, MA, the Nation's oldest African American summer youth residential camp, has long benefited from Thomas's support: he reopened it in 1980 following a 6-year hiatus and serves