

offset the costs of public schools, roads, and other needs of Colorado residents.

That amount may not be the same in the future, because the bill will revise the formula for distribution of payments so as to reflect the historical allocation of payments, the concentration of public land in a county, and the current economic condition of a recipient county. But Colorado will still benefit from the program.

I do regret that as it comes before the House today the bill does not include provisions dealing with another program of importance to Colorado's counties—the payments in lieu of taxes, or PILT, program. Under PILT, counties in Colorado received more than 17 million dollars last year—but would have received more if the full authorized amount had been appropriated.

As introduced, and as approved by the Natural Resources Committee, the bill would have provided for automatic payments under PILT at 80 percent of the authorized level in 2008, 90 percent in 2009, and 100 percent in 2010 and 2011. That would have meant that payments would not depend on annual appropriations.

I have worked for years to make full PILT payments automatic, so that our counties would be assured that they would receive the full amounts authorized—and I will continue to do so.

Mr. Speaker, some of our colleagues have indicated they will oppose this bill because of the inclusion of provisions to reform the "royalty relief" afforded to some companies engaged in development of energy resources in the Gulf of Mexico.

I think those provisions are sound, and deserve support, just as they did when the House approved them last year. They would ensure that the companies pay their fair share of royalties on flawed leases granted in 1998 and 1999. Specifically, companies not currently paying any royalties due to these flawed leases would have to pay new "Conservation of Resource Fees," in order to be eligible for new Federal leases for drilling.

In 1998 and 1999, the Interior Department issued oil and gas leases for drilling offshore in the Gulf of Mexico that mistakenly failed to include "price thresholds," which trigger a requirement for companies to pay royalties to the Federal Government when the price of oil and gas exceeds a certain level. As a result, the companies that got these leases are exempt from paying any royalties at all—and, according to a preliminary estimate by the Government Accountability Office, that could mean that the taxpayers will be shortchanged to the tune of some \$15 billion over the duration of the leases. This bill, like legislation approved in the House last year, corrects that mistake. I urge the bill's approval.

THE RETIREMENT OF PRINCIPAL ARLEN KRINKE

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2008

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, this Sunday a beloved community leader in Elk River, Minnesota, will be retiring. Arlen Krinke has faithfully served as Principal of St. John

Lutheran School for 34 years, pouring his heart into the school and earning the profound admiration of people throughout the community.

Schools are the fertile ground where young minds are shaped, young hearts are filled with hope, and young dreams are given life. As generations of students can attest, Principal Krinke has made St. John Lutheran a place filled with hopes and dreams, and where mind, body and spirit are nurtured and fulfilled.

There are few greater services one can render than to serve the young. And Principal Arlen Krinke truly has a servant's heart. He has given his all to this school—and made a real and lasting impact on those who walked through its doors.

Most important, Arlen Krinke has helped foster a learning community that values not just facts and statistics and data—but faith and character and values. At a time when so many are trying to pull kids astray, Arlen Krinke helped to lead them down the right path.

And so on this bittersweet occasion, it is my honor to join the families and students of the St. John Lutheran Community in recognizing Arlen Krinke for his 34 years of service and in wishing him well in his retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRUCE L. BRALEY

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2008

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, on rollcall 379, H.R. 3021, I was not present. If I had been there, I would have voted "yes."

INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION RESOLVING TO ADDRESS THE COSTLY OBESITY EPIDEMIC BY IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE ACCESS TO AND PRO- MOTION OF NUTRITION, PHYS- ICAL ACTIVITY, AND HEALTH CARE IN ALL OF CONGRESS'S WORK

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2008

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today I am proud to introduce a resolution to address the obesity epidemic by identifying opportunities in all of Congress's work to increase access to and promotion of nutrition, physical activity, and healthcare.

According to recent estimates, by the time the 111th Congress takes office, 73 percent of American adults could suffer from excess weight or obesity. Nearly 20 percent of our children already struggle with overweight and obesity. The Department of Health and Human Services estimates the current cost of the epidemic to be almost \$120 billion annually. The impact of this reality is vast and it is clear that the time for action is now.

Obesity is a complex problem and there is no single legislative action that will solve our country's growing epidemic. Instead, addressing obesity will require a wide range of policy,

environmental, cultural, and personal changes to truly affect meaningful change. We are fortunate that opportunities abound to have a positive impact on reversing the current trend thru legislation as diverse as a cap on carbon dioxide emissions, Medicare reform, the tax code, transportation policy, and the reauthorization of "No Child Left Behind."

Congress must work in a bipartisan fashion to identify the opportunities within all major legislative actions to promote health in every policy. In doing so, we can address the obesity epidemic on multiple fronts by improving nutrition, increasing physical activity, and expanding access to care. It is my sincere hope that we can work together to enact legislation that will result in a healthy, active and vibrant society. Please join me in co-sponsoring this resolution and pledging to identify meaningful opportunities to turn the tide on America's obesity epidemic.

MAY AS NEUROFIBROMATOSIS AWARENESS MONTH

HON. JOHN SULLIVAN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 5, 2008

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam Speaker, I rise to state for the record, and bring to my colleague's attention, that the month of May is globally recognized as Neurofibromatosis Awareness Month.

On May 13, 2008, Tami Harbour, her mother Marcia Higgins from Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Tami's 94 year-old grandmother Wilma Seely from Owasso, Oklahoma, came to my office with Tami's twin sister Teri to educate my staff and me about Neurofibromatosis (NF).

NF is a genetic disorder that causes tumors to form on the nerves of the body. These tumors are not restricted to any certain portion of the body and can appear anywhere, at any time, at any age. NF type 1 strikes one in every 2,500—3,000 people, without regard to race, sex or age. The first signs of the condition are usually multiple cafe-au-lait colored spots on the skin. Some of the youngest victims of this condition can also be subject to optic gliomas—brain tumors that can cause blindness and can be life-threatening. In addition, bone deformities, including scoliosis at an early age, and plexiform tumors, which can cause severe medical problems and turn cancerous, can also be caused by NF. Learning disabilities occur in more than 65 percent of the individuals with NF type 1.

NF type 2 is a genetically distinct form of NF that causes tumors to form on both acoustic nerves, resulting in deafness. NF type 2 also causes visual problems and muscle weakness. Symptoms of this type of neurofibromatosis include ringing in the ears, balance problems, and reduced hearing; however, these symptoms often do not appear until the late teen years, even if the condition has been present since birth. NF type 2 strikes 1 in 30,000 people and does not discriminate by age, sex or race.

At this time, surgery is the only effective treatment to relieve the problems caused by the symptoms of both forms of NF. There is no pharmaceutical treatment to control the growth of tumors and, unfortunately, there is no known cure. Half of the people with NF do