

respected for his philanthropy, his willingness to devote countless hours to charitable endeavors and for his passion for the advancement of education, both on a statewide and national level. Because of his commitment to his community, he was elected mayor of the City of Wilson from 1986 to the present.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Michael Evans Wilson. He was an incredible person who made a difference in the lives of so many Arkansans. He will be remembered as a great friend and will be missed by all who knew him.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOHN T.
KILBANE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 12, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of John T. Kilbane. John has transformed his Cleveland union into an educated workforce prepared for the challenges of a global economy.

Since 1974, when he emigrated to the United States, John has put in many years of dedicated work. Whether working the front lines of the Ford plant or managing important projects for a west coast-based company, in his years of hard work, John has held numerous important positions within the Local #310 union.

John was instrumental in introducing apprenticeship programs that teach laborers to do things they never did before. John established the first Construction Craft Laborers Apprenticeship Program in Ohio. He is also responsible for the construction of his Local 310's new Training Center, which welcomed its first class in 2005.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognizing John T. Kilbane, an innovative leader in Cleveland, for his commitment to his brothers and sisters. May future generations of laborers draw inspiration from his efforts.

AMENDMENT TO THE ALASKA NATIVE CLAIMS SETTLEMENT ACT TO PROVIDE LAND RIGHTS FOR THE 13TH REGIONAL CORPORATION

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 12, 2008

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, there have been many items of unfinished business which flowed from the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, ANCSA, which was originally enacted on December 18, 1971. A number of these issues have been resolved over the years. Few of those unfinished items, however, stand out in my mind as much as the need to provide land selection rights to the members of the 13th Regional Corporation, which was formed by ANCSA primarily to represent Alaska Natives residing outside of Alaska at that time. Today, with the 13th Regional Corporation Land Entitlement Act, I address that objective. I am pleased to be joined in this

sponsorship by my friend and colleague from Washington State, Congressman NORM DICKS. For me, both of us, this completes a significant goal of the original Act. Let me give you the background of this issue and the story of the 13th Region.

In 1971, after years of debate, Congress enacted the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971, 43 U.S.C. § 1601 et seq., "the Settlement Act", extinguishing claims by Native Alaskans based on aboriginal land rights. The Act divided the State into 12 geographical Regions which were to be composed as far as practicable of Natives having a common heritage and sharing common interests. In addition, non-resident Natives were given the option either to enroll in one of the 12 Regional Corporations established for each region or to elect, by majority vote, to form a separate 13th Regional Corporation to represent the interests of non-resident Alaskan Natives.

Provision for the 13th was focused upon serving the interests of non-resident Alaska Natives while affording them their fair share of the settlement. Some non-resident Natives had been dislocated during and after World War II, others left their homes to serve in the Armed Forces, many left to attend high schools and colleges in other States, and still others, for economic reasons, migrated south in the hope of attaining employment. Information about the Settlement Act and its implications for non-resident Natives was difficult to obtain, spotty and inconsistent in character, and generally insufficient to enable individual non-resident Natives to make reasoned decisions. In this situation, a majority of non-resident Alaska Natives felt that their interests could best be protected by forming the non-resident 13th to better control and direct their own affairs. Ultimately approximately 4,500 Alaska Natives chose to enroll in the new 13th. Wherever they resided then, or now, however, they were and are Alaska Natives, and we honor them.

In opting to join the 13th, however, these non-resident Natives were deprived of the ability to fully participate in the settlement of their claims as that settlement was generally provided by the Act. Let me be specific. Monetary payments under the Settlement Act were made through the Alaska Native Fund, and distributed among all 13 Regional Corporations on a per capita basis, but land was distributed only among the 12 resident Regional Corporations and the Village Corporations within those regions. No additional money, however, was provided to the 13th to compensate for the absence of land. The Settlement Act also provided that the 12 Regional Corporations would share among themselves some of the revenues from all natural resource development occurring on the lands conveyed to them. The 13th did not receive this right.

In sum, Alaska Natives enrolled in the 13th did not receive any land, and did not receive additional money in lieu of land, and did not get any right to participate in distributions from the pool of natural resource revenue funds in which the other Regional Corporations shared. The 13th, being comprised of non-resident Alaska Natives, was thus denied full participation in the settlement provided by the Settlement Act. While some will claim that this was their choice, it seems clear that it was an inadequately informed choice, and resulted in depriving over 4,500 members of the 13th of two

of the three major benefits of this Act. This bill seeks to resolve at least the absence of an entitlement to land.

Over the years, the effect of this inequity in the Act has been to substantially disadvantage the shareholders of the 13th as they tried to build an economically successful corporation and to deny them the benefits of land ownership in Alaska. As an example, the 13th received its pro rata share of the monetary payments under the Act but was obligated to distribute 50 percent of those proceeds immediately to shareholders as they were received over a number of years. The remaining 50 percent provide the only capitalization for the small corporation with many scattered shareholders. Without a land base or resources to develop, the 13th did not have the economic base, nor the crucial development alternatives afforded other Regional Corporations. The corporation did not receive revenues from the development of resources, such as timber harvest which was accomplished in several regions, or a share of Sec. 7(i) revenues, including petroleum revenues, which were a source of income for the 12 Regional Corporations. The 13th has survived but with some difficulty, and it is time to provide a fairer share of the settlement to them for their future.

To correct the inequity caused by the Settlement Act's failure to equally compensate non-resident Natives for the extinguishment of their aboriginal land claims, the 13th Regional Corporation Land Entitlement Act will place the shareholders of the 13th on a better footing with shareholders of the other Alaska Native Regional Corporations, at least as far as land is concerned.

The proposal authorizes the 13th to select land from the excess lands previously withdrawn by the Secretary of the Department of the Interior on behalf of other Regional Corporations. The proposed legislation gives absolute priority to land selections by the State of Alaska and other Native Corporations, regional and village, and prohibits the selection of lands from within conservation system units, as defined in the Alaska National Interests Lands Conservation Act. The 13th may not select from the National Petroleum Reserve, the Tongass or Chugach National Forests and other sensitive areas. In other words, the 13th is at the very end of the line for its land selections. This is nonetheless far more equitable for the 13th than the present situation.

In proposing this legislation, the shareholders of the 13th are seeking equity by being placed on a stronger and more equal footing with respect to the Native shareholders of the other 12 Native Regional Corporations. This is supported by the Alaska Native community. This proposal has been endorsed by the Alaska Federation of Natives and by the Association of Regional Corporation Presidents, and it has been thoroughly considered by the Alaska delegation.

My first term in Congress was the one immediately following the enactment of ANCSA in late 1971. I can tell you that neither the Act nor its implementation focused much attention on the 13th. They were not fully represented, so members of the Washington State delegation like the late Congressman Lloyd Meeds and Senator Henry Jackson took their side but were not able to accomplish land rights for the 13th, or a monetary settlement in its stead. Congressman Meeds believed throughout his life that this was a matter that required resolution.