I would also like to recognize Cynthia Greenberg, who is the president of the New Mexico School Nurses Association, for her commitment to our schools and students.

In closing, I want to thank all the school nurses in New Mexico and around the country for their enthusiasm and dedication. I call on my colleagues to join me in thanking them for their valuable work.

CLINTON EXECUTIVE ORDERS CONTINUE TO KILL IDAHO JOBS

HON. C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday one of the largest and most well known employers in Idaho—Boise Cascade—announced plans to close two lumber mills in the First District of Idaho, located in Cascade and Emmett. As a result, almost 400 of my constituents will lose their jobs. Many of these people have worked in the forest industry all of their lives.

Yesterday, I contacted the CEO of Boise Cascade about this unfortunate turn of events. He advised that the Clinton Administration's last minute executive orders squeezed their supply by shutting off access to thousands of acres of productive forest areas, and prevented any reasonable chance to harvest enough to keep their operations going.

I'm pleased that the Bush Administration has pledged to review these damaging executive orders. But reviewing them may not be enough.

I hope that the Bush Administration is just as aggressive with their use of executive orders as the Clinton Administration—in a way that protects the environment, the forests, and the livelihoods of our Idaho families and rural areas.

TRIBUTE TO MESCAL HORNBECK

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, while I often have the privilege of congratulating outstanding members of our community, I rarely have the honor of recognizing an individual as distinguished as Mescal Hornbeck. Through her work as nurse, teacher, community leader and town councilperson, Mescal has dedicated her life to helping others.

Mescal was instrumental in the development of the Woodstock Senior Recreation Committee, which continues to provide enjoyment for our senior citizens. Mescal's leadership with Meals on Wheels of Woodstock and the Woodstock Community Center is commendable and reflects her life-long commitment to community service. I am particularly grateful for Mescal's involvement with the Woodstock Chapter of Citizens for Universal Health Care where she is a tireless advocate for health care reform.

I have been fortunate to know and work with Mescal and have always found her to be extremely devoted to improving our community and our country. I am proud to call her my good friend. Mescal Hornbeck is a most deserving honoree and I applaud the creation of Woodstock's ''Mescal Appreciation Day.''

SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE LOCK-BOX ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2001

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2, The Social Security and Medicare Lockbox Act of 2001, that seeks to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to prevent the surpluses of the Social Security and Medicare Part A, Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund from being used for any purpose other than providing retirement and health security.

Mr. Speaker, during the 106th Congress, the House passed not one, but two, ''lock boxes.'' On May 26, 1999, the House passed H.R. 1259, the ''Social Security and Medicare Safe Deposit Box Act of 1999,'' which set aside just the Social Security surplus, by a vote of 416 to 12 and on June 20, 2000, the House passed H.R. 3859, the ''Social Security and Medicare Safe Deposit Box Act of 2000,'' which set aside both the Social Security and the Medicare surplus, by an even wider margin—420 to 2. Yet, even though neither of those bills became law, we still managed to protect both the Social Security surplus and the Medicare surplus.

Not only is the Republican Leadership covering the same ground by bringing up this bill today, it is also making the same mistakes that it made in the past.

Just as with both ''lock boxes'' from the 106th Congress, the bill before the House today has not been considered by any of the Committees of jurisdiction, thereby denying Members the opportunity to debate and to improve the bill.

Just as with both ''lock boxes'' from the 106th Congress, the bill before the House today does nothing to improve the long-term solvency of either Social Security or Medicare. Certainly, it is critical to ensure that these surpluses are not used to finance a huge tax cut or to fund spending on other programs. However, strengthening Social Security and Medicare requires more than simply protecting the surpluses they already possess. It requires actually adding to those surpluses, but this bill would not add a single dollar to either the Social Security Trust Funds or the Medicare Trust Fund.

Just as with both ''lock boxes'' from the 106th Congress, the bill before the House today will not protect Social Security and Medicare surpluses nearly as stringently as the Republican Leadership would have you believe. Like its predecessors, this vaunted lock box can be ''unlocked'' by any bill that defines itself as either ''Social Security reform legislation'' or ''Medicare reform legislation.'' This means that any bill, including bills to privatize Social Security or Medicare, can use the Social Security and Medicare surpluses as long as it designates itself as ''reform.''

Mr. Speaker, if we have already reached an agreement about the necessity of protecting the Social Security and Medicare surpluses and if there are obvious improvements that could be made to this bill, why is the Republican Leadership rushing this bill through the House?

The answer is obvious. When the Republican Leadership brings the President's tax cut to the House floor later this year, it wants to be able to claim that ''Republicans protected Social Security and Medicare,'' regardless of the price tag for that tax cut and regardless of how much it drained away resources needed for other priorities.

It is one thing to claim that you have protected Social Security and Medicare, but it is quite another to actually do it. Despite the assertions that Republicans make about this bill, the President's tax plan could easily dip into the Social Security and Medicare surpluses. All it would take is for the Rules Committee to waive the points of order contained in this bill.

Indeed, it is not Democrats here in the House who need to be persuaded about setting aside Social Security and Medicare surpluses. Democrats here in the House voted in favor of a Social Security and Medicare lock box in overwhelming numbers in the last Congress and will vote in favor of one again today.

The people who need to be persuaded about setting aside Social Security and Medicare surpluses are Republicans, both in the other body and in the White House.

Mr. Speaker, even President Bush's chief economic advisor, Larry Lindsey, when asked whether the government should dip into the Social Security surplus to make room for tax cuts that he thinks might stimulate the economy, responded: ''It's a question that needs to be asked,'' and OMB Director Mitch Daniels, when asked whether Medicare should get the same protection in terms of its surplus as Social Security, said: ''I don't agree . . . We could allow the concept of a Medicare surplus which exists in Part A, but not en toto, to obscure the need for real reform to which this administration will be committed as a fairly early priority. So for that reason I would be very hesitant to treat those funds in the same way as we do Social Security where I think it's quite in order.''

Furthermore, according to a Wall Street Journal article from February 5, 2001, ''The Bush administration also won't wall off Medicare's current surpluses in a ''lockbox' . . . In fact, Mr. Daniels said he has told his staff not to talk about a Medicare surplus.''

In addition, according to BNA's Daily Report for Executives (February 7, 2001), Senate Majority Leader TRENT LOTT has yet to make a commitment to a Medicare lock-box, suggesting '' 'We're going to think that through' before deciding whether to back the Medicare lockbox measure . . .''

Mr. Speaker, Democrats strongly support setting aside the Social Security and Medicare surpluses, but we also understand that doing that alone is not enough. Both programs need more resources. Unfortunately, once the President's tax plan moves through Congress, it will likely consume all available budget surpluses.

We can not afford to squander the opportunity that budget surpluses provide. Democrats favor a tax cut, but one that is enacted within a fiscally responsible framework. Tax cuts should leave room for priorities like debt reduction, education, transportation, a bipartisan program for defense, and strengthening Social Security and Medicare, including the