of the Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1999, which is cosponsored by myself and 184 of my colleagues.

Recently our country was shocked once again when a gunman entered a Jewish community center in Los Angeles, California, shooting at innocent children and workers with the intent of sending a message by killing Jews.

Last year in Laramie, Wyoming, a young man was killed only because he was gay. In Texas, an innocent man was murdered and dragged through the streets of Jasper just because he was an African-American. All of these incidents are hate crimes, and these do not just affect the group that was killed, but they affect all Americans.

I believe the Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1999 is a constructive and measured response to a problem that continues to plague our Nation, violence motivated by prejudice.

I know some people believe that hate is not an issue when prosecuting a crime. They say our laws already punish the criminal act and that our laws are strong enough. I answer with the most recent figure from 1997, when 8,049 hate crimes were reported in the United States.

REPUBLICANS BALANCE THE BUDGET WITHOUT RAIDING SOCIAL SECURITY

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I would echo the comments of my colleague, the gentleman from North Carolina, and would call to the attention of this House, and by extension, the American people, the headline which appears in the New York Times today. I quote it: ''Budget Balances Without Customary Raid on Social Security.''

Granted, Mr. Speaker, the Times tried to bury this on page A–18, but even the writer of the article says that this is enormous, this is of enormous import. Here is the reason why, Mr. Speaker. For the first time in 40 years, this Congress has balanced the budget without using social security funds. Indeed, there is a surplus of $1 billion.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let us take a walk down memory lane. For those 40 years, we had four Republicans in the White House and four Democrats, but also, for those 40 years, we had the liberals in control who spent 100 percent of the social security surplus on an annual basis and drove us further into debt.

Mr. Speaker, this is enormous news. We have balanced the budget, we have generated a surplus, and we have stopped the raid on social security trust funds.

WE NEED TO PUT AMERICA'S CHILDREN FIRST INSTEAD OF LAST

(Mr. WU asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, school has been in session from anywhere from 1½ months to 2 months, and we have got anywhere from 2 weeks to 2 months to bring this budget cycle to a close. It is time to put America's children first instead of last.

I have been working hard to reduce class size by putting 100,000 teachers into classrooms across America. We clearly need smaller class sizes in my congressional district. Some of the newest schools have overcrowding problems already, even though they have only been open for a year or two.

At other facilities, they either have trailers in the parking lot and in the schoolyard, or else there has not been any new construction since 1927, in some of the rural communities in my congressional district.

We need the ability to build classrooms where classrooms are needed. We need the ability to put additional qualified teachers into those classrooms. We need to put America's children first, instead of last. We need to get that taken care of in the next 30 to 60 days in this Congress.

REDUCING BLOATED FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL KEEP SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND SAFE

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, how sweet it is. This year the Republican Congress will balance the budget without spending the social security trust fund. This is the second year in a row. Most people are surprised to find that out. It has not been easy. We have made some tough choices. We have taken some harsh criticism from our opponents, from the media, and even from our friends.

Yes, it has been tough, and it is not over this year. The administration has a different idea. The President says we can spend more money. All we have to do is dip into social security, like a bear dips into a jar of honey. It is easy, and if we do not like that, well, we will just raise taxes.

Mr. Speaker, that would be a bitter pill. We do not need to dip into the jar of honey and we do not need to take a bitter pill to stop the raid on the social security trust fund. All we need to do is put our overweight Federal Government on a diet and reduce its consumption. Then we will stop the raid on the social security trust fund, take care of those truly in need, and balance the Federal budget. How sweet it is, Mr. Speaker.

THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY, HMOS, AND THE REPUBLICANS WORK TO UNDERMINE THE PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, last week we passed a historic piece of legislation giving patients strong protections against HMO wrongdoing. We put medical decisions back where they belong, in the hands of doctors and patients.

But the glow of our victory has quickly faded. Today the insurance industry, HMOs, and the Republican leadership are garnering their forces to undermine the Patients' Bill of Rights. The chairman of the Committee on Commerce said yesterday that the bill, and I quote, ''will never reach the President's desk.'' Plans are underway to bend, tear, and spindle these basic patient rights.

Families with loved ones who are sick need the Patients' Bill of Rights. They need it now. We should begin work immediately to reconcile our bill with the other Chamber's, and give patients the ability to choose their own doctors, guaranteed access to emergency and specialty care, the right to make health decisions with their doctors, and the ability to hold HMOs accountable.

Last week's victory was one battle in the war for strong patient protections. The American people deserve the Patients' Bill of Rights, and they deserve it now.

SOCIAL SECURITY LOCKBOX BILL HELD HOSTAGE BY FILIBUSTERS

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, on May 6 of this year, 139 days ago, I joined with 415 of my colleagues here in the House in supporting H.R. 1259, the social security lockbox bill.

The fight to stop the raid on social security in this year's budget debate offers the best possible reason for passing the social security lockbox bill. If the lockbox were in place this year, the big spenders would have to think twice before trying to go after the funds that rightly should be set aside for the seniors of today and tomorrow. We must stop balancing the Federal budget on the backs of our seniors and our social security trust fund.

Unfortunately, Members of the minority in the other body refuse to allow this bill to be brought to the floor for a vote. Six times there has been an effort to end the filibuster. Six times that effort has failed. The social security lockbox bill has been held hostage for 139 days. One hundred and thirty-nine days is long enough. It is time for the other body to act.

RURAL AMERICA AND THE POOR REMAIN LEFT OUT OF HIGH-SPEED DIGITAL INTERNET ACCESS

(Mr. TAUZIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1