country we would believe that he is innocent at this point—then his arrest is an example of a system that is on the verge of going out of control. I want to make it clear here that we will be following Mr. Cordero’s arrest closely. How his case and his personal safety is handled will be the subject of considerable attention. I know that bureaucrats hate whistle-blowers, here or, I am for sure, they hate them in Mexico as well. The integrity of public institutions, however, can only be main kept in those institutions, with regard for documentation, are able to tell their stories without retaliation.

Mr. Cordero’s case is very disturbing. And if it should prove to be a case of retaliation, it does not speak well of Mexico’s ability to deal seriously with the problems of corruption. I call on the Mexican Government to resolve this case quickly, and, of course, fairly. I ask our own U.S. administration and those of us here in the Congress, to monitor this case very closely. And in the case of the administration, please keep Congress informed. I expect Mr. Cordero’s rights—most importantly, his personal safety—will receive attention. Thank you.

Mrs. BOXER addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you very much. Before the Senator from Iowa leaves the floor, I want to thank him for bringing this issue before the Senate.

Mexico is continually asking for cooperation with this country in the areas of trade. I say to my friend, I am in a little bit of a battle right now over the dolphin-safe fishing of tuna where the Mexicans are really fighting very hard to have us change the rules of the game so they can go out and purse seine on dolphin and sell their tuna here in competition with our dolphin-safe American tuna people.

They want our cooperation, and yet we know the drugs are coming from Mexico, yet we know they are doing, I would say, virtually nothing to stop illegal immigration. I believe it is important to have a warm and good relationship with our neighbor, Mexico. But I think the Senator has raised an issue that really requires the attention of the U.S. Senate. And I will work with him, and I know Senator Feinstein, the senior Senator from California and I, want to thank him for raising this issue.

LEGISLATION PASSED BY CONGRESS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I came to the floor because I have been watching a series of dueling press conferences, one held by the Republicans this morning, the Republican leadership, one held by the Democratic leadership, to discuss who deserves credit for the flurry of legislation that has finally passed this Congress, after a do-nothing Congress.

Of course, the American people are going to make the decision about who deserves the credit or the blame, depending on how they view the legislation. The issues are welfare, health care, and minimum wage. We remember back President Clinton talking about how it is important to reform welfare, the fact that he granted many waivers to the States to reform welfare, the fact that he presented some excellent welfare reform bills which I consider to be real reform. And if the American Congress put out is very hurtful to my home State. It is a huge, unfunded mandate, and it also hurts children. As I said yesterday, it amazed me that Senators who earn large paychecks in relation to most of the people in this country did not have the heart to mandate that the little kids who are helpless and hopeless, whose parents cannot find a job, that they are not assured diapers, school supplies, emergency food and other things. So people will decide on that one.

On health care, we know Senator Kennedy, for years, has worked on that. Senator Kasellbaum and he got together and passed two provisions of the health care reform bill, very important provisions. I am very hopeful we will see portability of health insurance, so that when Americans lose their jobs, they can take their health care with them and they will not be punished if they have a pre-existing condition.

Who deserves credit for that? The Republicans say they do; I say look at the record. It was Senator Dole who blocked Senator Kasellbaum from bringing up the bill time and time again. It is in the RECORD. Finally she said, “I will offer it every day.” We finally have a bill.

Minimum wage. I do not have to tell you that Dick Armey, the majority leader of the Republicans, said, “I will fight a minimum wage increase with every fiber in my body.” Well, it was not good enough, Mr. Armey, because the army of people in this country did not agree with you. Now you want to take credit over there for it. The most important thing to this Senator is that people will get a minimum wage increase—I am happy about that—millions of hard-working Americans who do not want a handout, they want to work for a decent wage. Most of them, by the way, are adults, and most of them are women.

So we have an argument going on. As I watched the Republican press conference, it brought to mind a little fable. I want to tell you the little fable. Once upon a time, in 1994, the real Republicans took over the U.S. Congress. They came in like the wolf in Little Red Riding Hood, and this is what they did, on the record: They tried to roll back environmental laws that protect our children and our grandchildren. I am on the Environment Committee. I saw it. They tried to sell off our parks. As a matter of fact, Chairman Hansen said publicly it was not a question that they would close down the parks, it is just how they would do it. They tried to give huge tax breaks to millionaires, paid for by the middle class. They put through the largest cut in education in the history of our country. They denied many American women the right to choose. That is on the record. They even shut down the Government because Democrats would not let them destroy Medicare.

Mr. President, I rise today to communicate some very good news to my colleagues in the Senate. The good news is about an issue that I have previously talked about on two or three occasions on the Senate floor, the issue of schoolbus safety.

A REPORT CARD ON SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

Mr. DeWINE. Mr. President, I rise today to communicate some very good news to my colleagues in the Senate. The good news is about an issue that I have previously talked about on two or three occasions on the Senate floor, the issue of schoolbus safety.