into the negotiations of an agreement. This action could potentially have a profound impact, and negative implications on the economic future of all Americans, and all countries involved. What we need is ''fair trade.''

Mr. Speaker, we were sent here to represent the people of our respective districts—and—to delegate our authority, accountability, and responsibility for trade agreements would be blatantly negligent. The cost of this degree of irresponsibility is too great for companies and hard-working families to bear. The long-term cost is too high, the burden is too great, and the provisions are too unfair. Our country has paid too high a price already for free trade—what we need is ''fair trade.''

I have remained concerned for some time about the nature of the international trade agreements that our Government negotiates. They have not been fair to, nor appropriate for the American people.

It is for these reasons that I, in fact, opposed both the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The lack of attention to fundamental labor rights, and environmental protections is blatantly irresponsible.

We should be passing trade measures that effectively strengthen the U.S. economy, and well-being of the American people, not those that jeopardize it. There are serious economic, social, environmental and political consequences that must be addressed in any trade agreement. Individual workers' rights, decent standards of living, and environmentally safe working and living conditions are fundamental to any workable trade agreement.

Mr. Speaker, the continuing pattern of de-emphasizing the importance of internationally recognized labor rights in free trade treaties is dooming American workers to constant, unending pressure—to lower wages and benefits—under the disguise of improving our Nation's economic competitiveness internationally.

Ignoring environmental protections in trade agreements further leads to a diminished standard of living for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, ''Fast Track'' is not a right, and the American people must not be held hostage to this ''unfair trade agreement process.'' I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in voting no to ''Fast Track.'' Vote ''no'' to H.R. 2621.

PROTECT SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 25, 1998

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4578, the Republican plan to preserve 90 percent of the budget surplus for Social Security reform.

In supporting this bill, Republicans demonstrate our commitment to the 44 million people currently receiving Social Security benefits and the 82 million beneficiaries who will retire and begin collecting Social Security three decades from now. This bill sets aside $1.4 trillion dollars for Social Security—funds that will be used to strengthen a system that keeps millions of seniors out of poverty. Students of history will note this is $1.4 trillion dollars more than the Democrats set aside during their 40-year control of this chamber.

In supporting this bill, Republicans demonstrate that we are pro-active problem-solvers. Although the Social Security Trust Fund currently is running a surplus, we know that changing demographics—including the retirement of baby boomers like me—will threaten the long-term viability of the program. By setting aside $1.4 trillion, we guarantee that Congress will have the resources needed to implement a reform plan and preserve Social Security in perpetuity.

As Chairman ARCHER said earlier today, Republicans are committed to preserving Social Security and giving middle Americans much needed tax relief. Despite what the Democrats believe, these two are not mutually exclusive activities. The health of today's economy and a balanced budget generated from the prudent fiscal policies of GOP leadership give us the opportunity to do both.

Mr. Speaker, I take exception with the rhetoric coming from the other side of the aisle on this topic. The Democrats accuse Republicans of raiding the Trust Fund, yet these same members sat in a Ways and Means Committee hearing last week and heard Judy Chesser, Deputy Commissioner of the Social Security Administration say that wouldn't happen with a tax cut. When Ms. Chesser was asked whether this bill would affect the OASDI Trust Fund, she replied simply and clearly, ''No.''

The smear campaign Democrats are waging against this bill is irresponsible and absolutely false. America is fed up with lying; to set the record straight: This bill ''steals'' nothing—it ''saves'' money for Social Security. This bill ''robs'' from no one, it ''gives'' $1.4 trillion to our senior citizens.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 28, 1998

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, due to the wedding of my son in Pennsylvania, I was unable to make rollcall votes 466, 467, 468, and 469. Had I been present I would have voted ''aye'' on rollcall vote 466, ''yea'' on rollcall vote 467, ''no'' on rollcall vote 468, and ''aye'' on rollcall vote 469.

TAXPAYER RELIEF ACT OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, September 26, 1998

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1998, H.R. 4579, and in support of the Democratic substitute—which contains all of the tax cuts included in H.R. 4579. The Democratic substitute is a sound and responsible alternative as the tax cuts take effect only after Congress has enacted legislation to ensure the long-term solvency of Social Security.

At first glance, H.R. 4579 appears to be okay. In fact, it includes provisions that: Increase the standard deduction for married couples; provide the self-employed with a deduction for health insurance costs; and allow families, which take the $500 per child tax credit and the Hope Scholarship Credit, to apply such Credits against the alternative minimum tax. Each of these tax provisions are borrowed ideas that were originally proposed and sponsored by Democratic Members of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that the Republican leadership wants to spend money that it does not have, and that's just irresponsible. This tax bill waives the Budget Act, which requires that all tax cuts be offset and paid for in full.

H.R. 4579 takes $177 billion away from Social Security over the next then years, and diverts it to tax cuts. The projected surplus is based solely on the Social Security Trust Fund. In fact, if it was not for the Social Security Trust Fund, we would not even show a budget surplus. The budget surplus is comprised of investments that American workers have made in Social Security. These funds have already been committed to the trust fund.

This is the wrong pot of money to tap. It will be several more years before the non-Social Security portion of the budget is in surplus. By raiding the trust fund, H.R. 4579 places the long-term solvency of Social Security in danger. This measure depletes critical resources necessary to ensure that we can provide retirement benefits to future generations of Social Security recipients.

Mr. Speaker, we must save Social Security first. With the Nation enjoying a record budget surplus, we promised the American people—that if they would help us to control spending, and help us to balance the budget—and that if we could yield a budget surplus—we would use those funds to protect Social Security. To act otherwise, would be to renege on that critical promise.

While I have always supported responsible tax cuts that are paid for out of the budget, I reject fiscally irresponsible and short-sighted efforts such as this. The American people do not want us to jeopardize their Social Security benefits. We must preserve the surplus for Social Security, strengthen the system and ensure that all Americans will be able to enjoy the retirement income security that is provided by Social Security well into the next century.

It is for these reasons that I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing H.R. 4579 and in supporting the Democratic substitute.

A TRIBUTE TO THOMAS M. BARRY

HON. WILLIAM (BILL) CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 28, 1998

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute to an outstanding American and citizen from my home State of Missouri, Mr. Thomas M. Barry, on the occasion of his appointment as President of SBC International's Telkom South Africa operations.

Tom Barry represents the finest attributes of corporate service—his is a true American success story. For over 30 years he progressed