Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, for over 30 years, the Social Security and Medicare Part A trust funds have been used to distort the budget surplus numbers and mask deficits. This must not continue.

Today we have the opportunity to cast a vote that will end this shortsighted and fiscally irresponsible practice. Today we have the opportunity to lock away all surpluses in the Social Security and Medicare trust funds and ensure that these funds can only be spent to provide retirement and health care security for our seniors.

Mr. Speaker, the first step to saving Social Security and Medicare is to stop spending it on unrelated government programs. This is an essential first step to preserve and strengthen these programs for current and future retirees.

I urge my colleagues to send a clear message to all Americans and end the raid on Social Security and Medicare.

PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

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

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2, the Social Security and Medicare Lockbox Act of 2001. This measure guarantees that every penny paid into the Social Security and Medicare trust funds will be secure for the millions of seniors, including my 85-year-old mother in Nampa, Idaho, who rely on them today. It is also an important first step in shoring up the funds for young workers who will rely on them in the years to come.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is much more to do. And I look forward to working with the new administration and reforming Social Security to ensure that we keep our promise to those current beneficiaries and to those who are soon to retire, and just as importantly, to guarantee to those younger workers that they will get them when they reach their retirement age.

Mr. Speaker, we should also work to repeal the tax on senior citizens that was placed there by the last administration. H.R. 2 is a much-needed sign that the Federal government is keeping its commitment to senior citizens by creating a Social Security and Medicare Trust Lockbox to buttress these dollars against spending raids.

Our action today sends a strong message that saving Social Security and Medicare is a top priority of this Congress. The senior citizens that have contributed so much of their lives to our country deserve the comfort and the peace of mind that their country is there and will be there for them because they were there for us.

It is my hope, Mr. Speaker, that we will move quickly to accept this legislation.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

CONGRATULATING PRIME MINISTER-ELECT OF ISRAEL, ARIEL SHARON

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 34) congratulating the Prime Minister-elect of Israel, Ariel Sharon, calling for an end to violence in the Middle East, reaffirming the friendship between the Governments of the United States and Israel, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 34

Whereas the Governments of the United States and Israel are close allies and share a deep and abiding friendship based on a shared commitment to democratic values;

Whereas since its establishment in 1948, Israel has fulfilled the dreams of its founders, who envisioned a vigorous, open, and stable democracy;

Whereas the centerpiece of Israeli democracy is its system of competitive, free, and open elections;

Whereas on February 6, 2001, the people of Israel elected Ariel Sharon as Prime Minister of Israel; and

Whereas the election on February 6, 2001, is the most recent example of the commitment of Israel to the democratic ideals of freedom and pluralism, ideals that Israel shares with the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates Ariel Sharon on his election as Prime Minister, and extends to him the best wishes of the people of the United States;

(2) commends the people of Israel for reaffirming, through their participation in the election on February 6, 2001, their dedication to democratic ideals;

(3) urges Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat to use his influence and resources to see that violence in the Middle East is brought to an end;

(4) calls upon the countries that neighbor Israel and upon the international community to respect the freely expressed will of the people of Israel and to be prepared to engage in constructive relations with the new Government of Israel;

(5) reaffirms the close bonds of friendship that have bound the people of the United States and the people of Israel together through turbulent times for more than half a century; and

(6) restates the commitment of the United States to a secure peace for Israel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 34, the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 34, a measure which congratulates Prime Minister-elect, Ariel Sharon, of Israel, calls for an end to violence in the Middle East, and reaffirms the friendship between the United States and Israel.

I am pleased to have sponsors of this resolution on behalf of myself and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking Democratic member of our Committee on International Relations; and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), one of our freshmen Members; the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), chairman of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia; and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN), the ranking Democratic member of that subcommittee; as well as several other Members.

H. Res. 34 recalls the abiding alliance between Israel and the United States, which is grounded in our shared commitment to democratic values. In over 50 years of Israel's existence, it has stood as a beacon of democracy in a tension- and trouble-filled region.

On February 6, 2001, the citizens of Israel once again went to the polls to elect a Prime Minister in a competitive, free, and open election. That election was decisively won by Ariel Sharon. Accordingly, this legislation congratulates him on his election as Prime Minister and extends to him the best wishes of the people of the United States.

It also commends the people of Israel for reaffirming, through their participation in that election, their dedication to democratic ideals.

Mr. Speaker, the violence that has wracked Israel and the disputed territories for months is indeed deplorable. While H. Res. 34 urges Palestinian Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat to use his influence and resources to see that violence in the Middle East is brought to an end, the legislation also restates the U.S. commitment to a secure peace for Israel.

Our measure calls upon the countries that neighbor Israel and upon the international community to respect the freely expressed will of the people of Israel and to be prepared to engage in constructive relations with the new government of Israel.

The future will surely bring many new challenges to Israel, including the continued threat of terrorism and the

added danger imposed by weapons of mass destruction. It is critical the United States and Israel maintain an unshakeable alliance to further our many mutual interests.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is the first time that the distinguished chairman of the Committee on International Relations and I, as the new ranking member, jointly bring before this body an important resolution. And as we do so, I want to commend the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) for his work on this resolution; and I want to express the hope that we will be able to work on a bipartisan basis on a full spectrum of issues that benefit the national interests of the United States.

I rise, Mr. Speaker, in strong support of this resolution. The resolution has several aspects, and I would like to comment briefly on each of these.

The resolution in the first place congratulates the Prime Minister-elect of Israel, Mr. Ariel Sharon, who won the most recent election a few days ago with a landslide victory. This Congress has congratulated all previous Prime Ministers of the State of Israel, a fellow democracy; and I know that my colleagues will join the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) and me in expressing our congratulations to the newly elected Prime Minister.

Our two governments, the government of the United States and the government of Israel, are not only close allies and friends, but we share a deep and abiding commitment to democratic values. As a matter of fact, since the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, that state has fulfilled the dreams of its founders who envisioned a vigorous, open and stable democracy; and the centerpiece of that democracy is its system of free, competitive, and open elections.

□ 1415

I find it particularly amusing that some of Israel's neighbors, who have never had free and open elections, now criticize the people of Israel for having participated yet again in free and open and democratic elections.

Now our resolution urges Mr. Arafat to use his considerable influence and very significant resources to see that the violence in Israel and in the West Bank and Gaza come to an end. Mr. Arafat commands a so-called ''police force'' of over 40,000 well-armed soldiers, and it defies belief that if he were to truly be determined to put an end to the violence he would be incapable of doing so. Forty thousand well-armed men on that small territory are more than adequate to restore peace and stability in the region.

Our resolution, Mr. Speaker, also calls on all the neighbors of the State of Israel and the international community to respect the freely expressed will of the people of Israel and to be prepared to engage in meaningful and constructive relations with the new government of Israel.

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and I have just concluded a lunch with our Secretary of State, Colin Powell, who is about to leave on a journey to the region. I know I speak for all of us in wishing him good luck in this difficult undertaking. It is critical that Israel's neighbors and the countries in the region as a whole display a degree of responsibility, statesmanship, and commitment to move ahead with the peace process.

Clearly, given the current climate, there will be no final resolution of this long-festering conflict; but it is critical for the benefit of all the people in the region—Arabs, Palestinians and Israelis—that peace and stability be restored and the process of sitting down around the negotiating table with the new Government of Israel commence. We here in this body will do our utmost to facilitate this process. I wish the new Government of Israel, yet to be formed, good luck as it attempts to carve out for the people of Israel a permanent, stable and peaceful place in the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), a new Member of the House and a new member of the committee, brought the idea of this resolution to me as well as to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS). It was a helpful suggestion and one which demonstrates the leadership quality the gentleman's constituents have recognized by electing him to the House.

Accordingly, I would like to accord him the responsibility for managing the time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR) be permitted to control the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR) will control the time.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), the chairman emeritus of the Committee on International Relations and the chairman of the Subcommittee on Middle East and South Asia.

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I rise in strong support of H. Res. 34, a resolution congratulating Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon of Israel upon his election victory and calling for an end to the violence in the region, underscoring the longstanding friendship between the United States and Israel. I commend the distinguished chairman of our House Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking member of our committee, for cosponsoring this measure. I want to particularly commend the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), who initiated this measure.

Mr. Speaker, few nations could prosper and grow while under siege, on an almost constant state of alert and under attack, as Israel has had to contend with over the past 50-some years. Yet despite the tension and the violence imposed by unrelenting forces led by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, the Israeli people went to the polls in a free, fair, and democratic election to choose a new Prime Minister. General Ariel Sharon won that election by a decisive 25 percent.

We look forward to working with Prime Minister Sharon as he confronts the existential questions that Israel faces daily. We salute Israel and her citizens for their courage, their principled leadership and their commitment to democratic ideals and to peace with security. Support for Israel in the Congress reflects a friendship the American people feel for Israel. Those feelings are reflected in this legislative body's strong commitment to a secure and lasting peace for Israel.

Accordingly, I am pleased and proud to lend my support and cosponsorship to H. Res. 34. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. Before yielding to my next colleague, I want to recognize publicly the 6 years of distinguished service the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) spent as the distinguished chairman of our committee and welcome him in his new role as chairman of the Subcommittee on Middle East and South Asia.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution, which celebrates the triumph of Israeli democracy. Israel has been our consistent strategic ally in one of the most important and volatile regions of the world.

Surrounded by enemies, plagued by acts of vicious terrorism, which have claimed the lives of countless civilians, many specifically targeted at children and other noncombatants, Israel has nonetheless maintained its commitment to a free, open, and democratic society. Nations facing far fewer and less substantial threats have degenerated into repressive and despotic regimes.

In the wake of the Israeli election, regardless of whether Members of this

House or, indeed, average Americans may have had a preference for one candidate, party or another, we must continue as we always have to respect the fact that Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East. It is the people of Israel who must live under the guns of hostile neighbors and terrorists, and it is their sons and daughters who must wear the uniform of IDF and bear the risks.

As friends of Israel, we hope for peace; but we remain committed above all to Israel's security. And for that reason we must continue to work with the democratically elected government of Israel. It is only when Israel's neighbors understand that they cannot achieve their goals through violence that they may be willing to talk peace sincerely. As we have unfortunately witnessed, even when offered 95 percent of their stated goals, a Palestinian state, 100 percent of Gaza, and 95 percent of the West Bank, including even sovereignty over sites holy to Judaism as well as to Islam, the Palestinians responded with violence, refusing even to make a counteroffer; violence that continues to this day.

Israel was willing to make substantive and wrenching concessions in the form of land and control, for which in return she asked only the intangible promises of peace. Yasser Arafat could not even bring himself to mouth the words. Instead, he schooled Palestinian children in hate and violence; he placed young children in front of armed terrorists as human shields and offered their parents money to secure those children, practices that have drawn criticism from international human rights organizations.

The members of the world community have now clearly been shown, and we hope they have seen, that the honest and real efforts of Israel and of the United States to secure peace in that region have been rebuffed by the Palestinians, who continue to initiate violence and to proclaim as a condition for the end of that violence demands that, if accepted, would mean the end of the suicide of the Israeli state.

Even under these heavy burdens, Israel remains a strong and vital democracy. I congratulate the people of Israel on their commitment to peace and a free society; and I urge the administration to make clear that we will stand behind Israel 100 percent.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG).

(Mr. KNOLLENBERG asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I appreciate very much the opportunity to speak on this resolution.

I rise today to offer my support for House Resolution 34, congratulating Israel on a fair, democratic election and encouraging long-lasting peace in the Middle East. Both the United States and Israel share a deep commitment to democracy and free elections. This commitment provides a foundation for the great successes our countries have enjoyed. I join my colleagues today in commending the people of Israel for their dedication to democratic values and a system of competitive, free, and open elections.

This resolution also reaffirms the commitment of the United States to pursuing a secure peace for Israel and all the people of the Middle East. Given the events in and around Israel in recent months, and its relationship with the U.S., I believe supporting Israel is essential to our national interest. I am pleased that this resolution reconfirms our commitment to supporting Israel, and I am hopeful the parties involved in the current turmoil will find a way to bring lasting peace to the region.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the sponsors for bringing this timely resolution to the floor today, and I encourage all Members to join in supporting its passage.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER).

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California, and I thank the sponsors of this resolution, especially the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), our new colleague, who has shown such leadership on this issue.

We have once again been reminded of a lesson about the nation of Israel: That she is alone in an ocean of monarchies and dictatorships; that she is a democracy. And we congratulate Ariel Sharon on his election. But we have also been reminded of some valuable lessons that we should keep in mind and remember about the Palestinians. The fact of the matter is that Yasser Arafat and his people have shown time and time again in recent months that they simply do not care about finding peace. They have shown no interest.

As my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), pointed out, they were offered everything and then some and said no, and offered no proposals of their own. Instead, they turned to violence of the worst sort, the type of violence that showed not only the images we were led to believe about Israeli forces holding them down, pinned down; but, in fact, much of the violence that happened was outside of area A, outside of area B where Palestinians were looking for violence anywhere they could find it.

And just to make a good graphic image, the Palestinians have been using children as the stones of their war against Israel. This is the button they choose to press at every alternative. When there is a button for peace or a button for war, the Palestinians have pressed the one for war.

If there is any question about the truth of these things, we need only listen to what Yasser Arafat says not to the CNN audience, not to us, but what he says in Arabic to his own people, continually, again and again, preaching the notion of violence, preaching the voices of hate.

When we hold this in stark contrast to the voice King Hussein used when he was trying to get his people to embrace peace, and what Anwar Sadat did at the same time in Egypt to try to get his people ready for peace, we see that Arafat is no peacemaker.

This is also a time for us to be sending a message to the other Arab nations of the world, particularly Syria. We are not unaware that at this time the new president of Syria has within his control the ability to release the hostages that are being held.

□ 1430

I refer to Binyamin Avraham, Adi Avitan, Omer Souad, Elchanan Tannenbaum, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Ron Arad and Yehuda Katz. We must never forget these men who are held hostage by Syria and by Hezbollah.

I would hope that President Bush, at the same time that he welcomes the new Prime Minister of Israel, presses for the release of these prisoners of war.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK).

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Israel on its free and fair elections and congratulate Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon. He is now our partner in peace with this new administration, our President, and a new Congress that must restart the peace process.

Elections are the cornerstones of democracies, and Israel is the preeminent democracy in the Middle East. The United States, as Israel's most important and steadfast ally, honors this election and the new government of Prime Minister Sharon. Secretary of State Colin Powell recently said that Congress must continue to support Israel and her true partners in peace. And I am sure that we will do that. And this will be for Israel's long-term security.

We must finish to respect Israel's right to fight against terrorism and work to uphold and strengthen the security of her people.

I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking member, for their initiative on this; the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), my freshman colleague; and the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), my former boss and colleague.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KIRK. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), a freshman Member of Congress, who served on our Committee on International Relations and who was very supportive of Israel in that role, and now is even more supportive in his new role of congressman. I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his comments.

As a new member of the Committee on Armed Services, I look forward to working with the Committee on International Relations to support this alliance.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to my colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTSCH).

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, this is really an exciting day, I think a great day, for our Congress; and I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR) for bringing this resolution in front of us. It is clearly a bipartisan effort from both sides of the aisle, but it is also an opportunity for the world's greatest and oldest democracy, the United States of America, through our Chamber, to express our thanks that another democracy exists in a region of the world with too few democracies.

One thing that I think about often in this Chamber is literally right above us is, there is a series of law-givers that look down upon us in this Chamber. And there is only one that has a full frontal relief, and it is Moses literally right in front of us in this Chamber, and it is a part of the world that we are linked to as Americans in many direct ways.

To put in perspective, though, for just a couple of seconds what Israel has gone through in the last several months, over 500 Israelis have died through acts of terrorism since the Oslo Agreements. Over 500 people have died in the most horrendous and horrific circumstance that we have seen and we read about over that period of months.

What would that mean if it happened, God forbid, in the United States of America? What would the equivalent number be? It would be 25,000, 25,000 Americans in our society being killed through acts of terrorism. I do not even think we can contemplate what that would mean as individuals and as a society.

I think many of us understand what the battle is still going on and we thought the battle had ended really of the right of Israel to exist. That is really unfortunately what it seems the battle is still about. It is a battle that is, in a sense, literally not hundreds but thousands of years old. And it is a real question that is there an acceptance of Israel's right to exist from the Palestinian people, or is the thought that this is still a group of people who are like the Crusaders, who are going to last several decades and then leave.

I do not think anyone here believes that. I do not think anyone here thinks that. I do not think there is a soul in Israel that believes that or thinks that. But until that acceptance is there, I think the possibility for peace is more problematic and difficult.

We praise the democracy of Israel, and I think all of us look forward to the opportunity that Ariel Sharon has in this moment of time, that all of us know historically, there is a moment in time that he can reach out in terms of a hand of peace and a clear hand of peace that others have not been able to do. And I think the words of this Congress and the deeds of this Congress to offer our assistance in that effort are complete, united, and 100 percent.

I urge adoption of the resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 34 and would like to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE), the gentleman from New York (Chairman GILMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for their leadership on this issue.

On February 6, the Israeli people went to voting booths. What they said was loud and clear. They said, enough, enough violence, enough of the policy of peace, enough conceding of land and security. And if we listen closely, we will hear something else, we will hear the people say they do not want peace at any cost but peace with security.

It is appropriate today that we congratulate the people of Israel in completing a successful and peaceful transition of power through a democratic election. The election of Ariel Sharon as Israel's Prime Minister, coupled with the new Bush administration, signals a new era for the U.S.-Israel relationship and a new era for the Middle East.

Peace will not be sought for the sake of a legacy. I believe very strongly that the United States must maintain its commitment to Israel's security as a fundamental basis of its involvement in the peace process. Any peace deal must come through direct negotiations between Israel and its neighbors without any prerequisites or forced solutions.

As President Bush's National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice has said, ''We should not think of American involvement for the sake of American involvement.'' American involvement should occur when we can advance the cause of peace.

We must not impose an artificial deadline on the players in the Middle East. Peace must come on their terms, not ours. Peace must come with security, not in spite of it.

Israel has always made a sincere commitment to peace in the region. Many times their commitment to peace has caused the loss of lives and land. We need to make sure we stand with and support our only Democratic ally in the region.

I join my colleagues today in congratulating Ariel Sharon on his election and welcome a continued dialogue about how to best stop the violence and bring about peace and stability in this vitally important region.

Both the United States and Israel are off on the right foot in this new era, and I look forward to working toward a solution that brings peace with security.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, as one of America's staunchest allies and the only democracy in the Middle East, Israel continues to set a shining example of free and fair elections, the peaceful transition of power, and vibrant political discourse.

I congratulate Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon on his victory and wish him well. I share the Prime Minister's conviction that Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat must bring an end to the violence and reign in terrorism.

The Israeli election on February 6 once again demonstrated why the strong bond between the United States and Israel is continually reinforced by our shared values and shared goals. This is the foundation for America's firm solidarity with the State of Israel.

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, as a co-sponsor, I rise in strong support of this resolution, which commends the people of Israel for conducting a free and fair election, and reaffirms the important bonds between the United States and Israel.

On February 6, 2001, the people of Israel elected a new Prime Minister, Likud Party Leader Ariel Sharon. At this time of transition in Israel, I believe it is appropriate to commend the leadership and vision of Prime Minister Ehud Barak. Less than two years ago, Israelis elected Mr. Barak as their Prime Minister, after he aggressively campaigned to pursue lasting peace agreements with the Palestinians and their Arab neighbors. It's fair to say that Mr. Barak delivered on his promise to go the extra mile in the name of peace. During his tenure, Prime Minister Barak withdrew Israeli forces from Lebanon, expressed a willingness to negotiate the return of the Golan Heights to Syria, and offered the Palestinians statehood and control over sections of Jerusalem. Regrettably, after offering more in the name of peace than any of his predecessors, the Palestinian leadership left Mr. Barak's offers at Camp David's negotiating table, favoring instead a return to terror and violence, as witnessed over the past four months in the West Bank and Gaza. Despite the tireless efforts of Mr. Barak and the personal involvement of President Clinton, a peace agreement was not realized. With the far-reaching proposals offered by Mr. Barak now off the table, and with a new Administration in the United States, the future of the peace process remains unclear.

Despite these developments, there is room for optimism. Since his election, Prime Minister-elect Sharon has displayed a willingness to embrace a coalition government, with his overtures to Mr. Barak to join his cabinet as Defense Minister, and former Prime Minister Shimon Peres as Foreign Minister. Yes, some may say that these moves are calculated to meet the statutory 45-day requirement to form a coalition government. But more importantly, these initial gestures may display Mr. Sharon's pragmatic intentions to continue the peace efforts initiated by his predecessors. I hope that is the case. I have also been encouraged by the actions of Secretary of State Colen Powell, who recently announced his intention to travel to the Middle East later this month, and has remained in regular contact with the leaders of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia.

The resolution we are considering today expresses strong support for the State of Israel, and for its commitment to the democratic ideals of freedom and pluralism. Importantly,

the resolution also urges Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat to use his influence to end the violence in the Middle East, and reaffirms the historical bond of cooperation between the United States and Israel, and our nation's commitment to help secure peace in the Middle East. I believe the U.S. is right to press the Palestinian leadership to abide by the terms of the Oslo Accords, which called for renunciation of violence, and the settlement of all disputes through negotiation.

I believe passage of this legislation is an important gesture, because Israel is our only democratic ally in the Middle East. Regardless of how we may view the results of the Israeli elections, it is important for the U.S. to maintain its solidarity with the State of Israel. With the election of a new Israeli Prime Minister, I am hopeful that the Palestinians will choose dialogue over violence, and that Israel can continue its strong relationship with the U.S. to advance peace and stability in the Middle East.

I encourage my colleagues to stand with the State of Israel and support passage of this important resolution.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, as a brand new member of the House International Relations Committee, it is my pleasure to rise today to extend my congratulations to Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon on his victory in last week's elections, as well as to the people of Israel for their commitment to democratic principles of government. I join my colleagues in assuring Prime Minister-elect Sharon of our country's unwavering support and commitment to the State of Israel. We remain steadfast in our commitment to Israel's security and look forward to working with him in pursuing regional peace and stability, as well as working to further strengthen U.S.-Israel relations.

It is imperative that we continue the dialogue for peace in the Middle East, and to this end, I call upon Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat to demonstrate a commitment to the peace process by calling for an immediate end to the violence.

I also want to acknowledge the work of the House International Relations Committee Chairman, Mr. HENRY HYDE, and the lead sponsors of this resolution, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. ACKERMAN, and Mr. CANTOR, for their work on this resolution. I look forward to working with them in the House International Relations Committee on this and other issues of importance to our national interests and foreign policy.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a fair, free, and open election took place in Israel on February 6, 2001, to determine the next Prime Minister of that nation. I rise today to support House Resolution 34, which congratulates Prime Minister-Elect Ariel Sharon as the elected leader of the people of Israel. I am a cosponsor of this measure.

The measure commends the people of Israel for reaffirming, through participation in the election, their dedication to democratic ideals; urges Palestinian Liberation Organization Yasser Arafat to use his influence and resources to see that violence in the Middle East is brought to an end; and calls upon Israel's neighbors and the international community to respect the will of the Israeli people and engage in constructive relations with the Israeli government.

Naturally, the resolution also reaffirms the close bonds of friendship that have developed between the peoples of the United States and Israel and restates the commitment of the United States to a secure peace for Israel.

Mr. Speaker, peace is never easy to broker. Prime Minister-Elect Sharon has a formidable task ahead of him, and we need to forge ahead as an international community to help bring further stability to the Middle East. As a result, I am pleased to learn that Prime Minister-Elect Sharon is looking to build some consensus within the considerably wide political spectrum in Israel to bridge differences and gain some momentum for the peace process. It is encouraging that in forming a government, Prime Minister-Elect Sharon has called upon Prime Minister Ehud Barak—he is still leading caretaker government in Israel—and former Prime Minister Shimon Peres to join his coalition government. Hopefully, some arrangement can be made for these distinguished individuals to serve together within an Israeli cabinet.

The larger question of peace in the region is predicated on continued negotiations with the Palestinians. I will always be a strong supporter of the Middle East peace process because we can never stop trying. We struggle for peace, Mr. Speaker, because the current wave of violence is unacceptable. It undermines the very basis for peace, the notion that Palestinians and Israelis can trust each other and live together.

Last year, we edged a little closer to establishing a permanent blueprint for peace between the Israelis and Palestinians at Wye River. The principals involved did their best. While a peace agreement did not come to fruition, the Israelis and Palestinians conducted an unprecedented level of negotiations in the pursuit of a permanent peace. They discussed issues and exchanged viewpoints on pivotal matters of dire meaning to the Israeli people and the Palestinian people.

Mr. Speaker, we don't really know when all parties to this ongoing conflict will find everlasting peace and reconciliation. We do know, however, that Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Liberation Organization and Prime Minister-Elect Sharon of Israel have an acute sense of the high stakes involved. Prime Minister-Elect Sharon is currently looking into various confidence-building measures between Israel and the Palestinians in order to improve the atmosphere and proceed towards peace. This is a common sense idea. We have no other alternative.

The recent violence in the Middle East underscores the need to get the peace process back on track. We must do so expeditiously. I urge my colleagues to adopt House Resolution 34.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I reluctantly rise in opposition to H. Res. 34. This resolution is unclear and, hence, leaves the ability for much mischief. As the resolution's introductory sentence makes clear, this legislation is considered for ''other purposes,'' which is to say, unspecified purposes.

Certainly Israel has been a longstanding friend to the United States, sharing many of our interests including peace, open trade, and free movement across international borders. It is equally clear that the people of Israel and the Middle East have long been torn by violence and, as such, share our desire to seek peace. We should, in fact, call for an end to the violence and hope all parties will see why this must be achieved. We are also right to congratulate Mr. Sharon, as is customary to be done with the victor of any election. We have all fought those battles ourselves and rightly understand the commitment needed to succeed in that arena.

What then is the problem with this resolution? In fact, there are two problems and they are closely related. The substantive problem here is summed up in that last clause which ''restates the commitment of the United States to a secure peace for Israel.'' Certainly we wish peace upon all the people of the world, and in this sense, we are committed to peace. However, we must ask what other sorts of commitments are implied here. The vagary of this resolution leaves open the possibility that those who support it are endorsing unwise and constitutionally-suspect financial and military commitments abroad. Moreover, peace will not best be secured for Israel by the further injection of the United States into regional affairs; rather, it will come when Israel has the unfettered sovereignty necessary to protect its own security.

As written, this resolution can be interpreted as an endorsement of unconstitutional acts of aggression upon Israel's sovereignty. In this I cannot engage. Thus, it is the less-than-clear nature of the resolution upon which we are voting that makes it necessary for me to object.

This brings me to the second problem, the procedural laxity involved here. This resolution was submitted by a number of distinguished members and referred to the Committee on International Relations. The highly-regarded chairman of that committee is the primary sponsor of this legislation and a number of other committee members are among its original cosponsors. Nonetheless, a number of other members of the committee and I were not included in the process. Perhaps, had this bill traveled through the commonly established processes of this institution we would have had the ability to clarify the ''commitments'' and ''other purposes'' to which this bill refers. In short, had the committee held a hearing and mark-up, the vagaries could've been removed in the markup process. In such an instance it would be likely that we could achieve the kind of unanimous support for these resolutions, for which I often hear personal appeals. In the future, those who are interested in gaining such unanimous support might consider these procedural concerns if they seek unanimity on this floor. In the instant case, however I must vote ''no'' for the reasons I have here expressed.

Hopefully these reasons will be considered so that in future instances the opportunity to make clarifications will be offered to those duly-elected members of the committees of this House.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 45, congratulating the people and the Prime Minister-elect of Israel on the success of the February 6, 2001 election.

I also want to commend the authors of this resolution, the distinguished Chairman of the International Relations Committee (Mr. HYDE), the distinguished ranking Democrat on the International Relations Committee and Co-Chairman of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus (Mr. LANTOS), as well as the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR).

These individuals should be commended for their leadership and I appreciate their working to bring the important measure to the floor.

On behalf of myself and my constituents in the 9th Congressional District of Illinois, I Congratulate the people of Israel and the Prime Minister-elect of Israel, Ariel Sharon, for the successful February 6 election which further demonstrates Israel's commitment to democracy.

This resolution also reaffirms the policy of the United States that there must be an end to the violence in the Middle East, that we in this nation value our close friendship with Israel and are committed to Israel's security. Furthermore, it calls on Israel's neighbors and the international community to respect the outcome of this election, and urges the entire international community to help foster peace in the Middle East.

The ongoing violence that threatens the people of Israel is troubling to me and it is important that the United States be clearly on record in support of Israel and in support of peace.

I remain committed to bring whatever I can to guarantee a bright future for Israel and continuing United States support for efforts to bring peace and stability to Israel and the Middle East region. Again, I thank my distinguished colleagues for introducing this resolution and urge all member to vote in support.

Mr. RILEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise as an enthusiastic cosponsor of House Resolution 34. I want to join with my colleagues here in the House in offering my sincere congratulations to Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon as he sets out to lead his country and our close ally, Israel, during this very important moment in our history.

Prime Minister Sharon is faced with many challenges. He must work to form a solid coalition and working government. I join with many others in the hope to see a Unity Coalition form in support of Prime Minister Sharon and his plan for both the internal domestic progress of the Israeli state as well as his vision for the achievement of peace. We must believe that a lasting resolution to the violence and division that has existed between the Israelis and Palestinians for far too long is possible. I am confident of this and mindful that major issues remain to be resolved.

The Peace Progress is of central importance to the region. I want to applaud Prime Minister Sharon's strong commitment to the absolute cessation of violence in the Middle East. Violence has plagued the Peace Process and it simply must stop. I believe it is importance that Congress go on record today with a clear message that we support the decision of the Israeli people, we support Prime Minister Sharon, and that we are vitally interested in continuing the close and prosperous relationship that our two countries have worked to foster over these many years. Much work and many monumental decisions remain.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the sponsors of this bill and House Leadership for bringing it to the floor. I ask my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I congratulate Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon for his recent victory over Prime Minister Ehud Barak.

Israel is facing a very difficult situation in trying to pursue peace with the Palestinians while at the same time trying to protect the people of Israel from the forces seeking their destruction. I am hopeful that Prime Minister-elect Sharon will continue to explore options for peace with Chairman Arafat, but there must be a secession of hostilities before any new peace negotiations can commence.

The Middle East peace process is at a crossroads. As we saw by the election returns, the Israeli people do not feel secure in their own homes and communities. Chairman Arafat is responsible for this feeling because it is his followers who are pursuing the course of violence. Prime Minister-elect Sharon will have to confront this violence with whatever means necessary to restore some semblance of order. However, it is my hope that more violence will not be necessary to move the peace process.

Both the Palestinians and the Israelis have the ability to inflict serious damage on one another, but what would that accomplish? I believe Prime Minister-elect Sharon knows this and is willing to restrain his forces if Chairman Arafat will do the same. At this point, the Middle East needs to remember what was accomplished in Oslo and try to rebuild the trust and respect developed there.

To Mr. Sharon, I wish him the best of luck as he moves forward trying to form his coalition government.

To Mr. Arafat, the ball is in his court. He will never achieve anything for his people pursuing the path of violence and terror. There has to be a compromise and I hope what Chairman Arafat was not able to reach with Prime Minister Barak, he can bridge with Prime Minister-elect Sharon.

The United States stands with the people of Israel as they struggle forward to make peace with all their Arab neighbors.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the principles embodied in House Resolution 34. Introduced by my esteemed colleagues, Mr. HYDE, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. GILMAN and Mr. ACKERMAN, the resolution emphasizes how important it is for the United States to remain engaged in the Middle East and establish a good working relationship with the new government in Israel. I join my colleagues in commending the people of Israel for reaffirming their dedication to the democratic ideals of freedom and pluralism and express my sincere congratulations to Ariel Sharon on his recent election to the position of Prime Minister.

We have reached a critical juncture in the Middle East region. It is imperative for the international community to support and encourage all who seek peace and who wish to end the decades of violence. Killings have become too commonplace. Congress must emphasize peace rather than partisanship and hesitate to lay blame.

In this ongoing and arduous process, it is crucial that the United States maintain its involvement in the peace process and continue to work diligently with the international community and with the new Government in Israel. Real peace must be achieved and the United States must remain an active partner in the process.

I extend my sincerest congratulations to Mr. Sharon and wish him and his colleagues good fortune in the coming months.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 34 introduced by my distinguished colleagues from the International Relations Committee, Chairman HYDE, our Ranking Member, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. GILMAN, Mr. ACKERMAN, and Mr. CANTOR.

On February 6th, the State of Israel held free and fair elections for the 16th time in its 52 year history. In a region more familiar with long-standing monarchies and dictatorships than democratic institutions, Israel should be commended for setting an example to be emulated by others in the Middle East.

On behalf of the residents of the 7th Congressional District of the great state of New York, I would like to congratulate Ariel Sharon on his election victory.

Since its creation in 1948, Israel has made tremendous strides in an effort to co-exist peacefully with its neighbors. It is my hope, that Mr. Sharon will take the torch once held by Rabin and Ben-Gurion, and lead the people of Israel to a peaceful and prosperous tomorrow.

The United States will continue to stand alongside the State of Israel in its quest for such a future.

I commend my colleagues for spearheading this resolution, and I proudly stand with the men and women of this chamber in support of the new administration in Israel.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for H. Res. 34, congratulating the Prime Minister-elect of Israel, Ariel Sharon. Mr. Sharon's election in a time of crisis speaks volumes about him and the State of Israel. I would add that this resolution says something important about the United States that many countries in the Middle East need to know: Whoever the Prime Minister of Israel may be, that person and the government of Israel will enjoy the friendship and full support of this House and the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I have great confidence in Ariel Sharon, a man who I believe can bring both peace and security to the people of Israel. The people of Israel—the only genuine democracy in the Middle East—have spoken and the results of their election must be respected. Anyone who believes Prime Minister-elect Sharon's election can be used to heighten tension, or to drive a wedge between the United States and Israel, is badly mistaken.

The bond between the United States and Israel, our longstanding friend and ally, is absolutely unshakable. Whether the prime minister is Ehud Barak or Ariel Sharon, Shimon Peres, or Benjamin Netanyahu, it is absolutely critical that all nations know that Israel will have the full support of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, Ariel Sharon's election sends a powerful message that we would be well-advised to heed: Yasir Arafat can't be a negotiator for the ''peace of the brave'' by day and a coordinator of cowardly terrorist acts by night. The people of Israel will not tolerate terrorism as a tool of diplomacy, or as an acceptable response when Palestinians believe that Israel's diplomatic offers are inadequate.

It seems to me that in giving this mandate to Ariel Sharon, the people of Israel are saying, in a very clear way, that peace initiatives will be met with peaceful responses, and that acts of violence will be met with appropriate responses, rather than further concessions.

Mr. Speaker, the Palestinians should be cautioned not to misread Sharon's hardline reputation to mean he is intransigent. This prime minister-elect represents a real opportunity. The Palestinians would be well advised

not to try to wait out Sharon's government until the next election; they may lose more than they gain.

As an original cosponsor of the resolution, I want to commend and thank Mr. HYDE and Mr. LANTOS, the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member on the House International Relations Committee, for their dedication and effort in getting this bill before the House today.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 34, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE LOCK-BOX ACT OF 2001

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2) to establish a procedure to safeguard the combined surpluses of the Social Security and Medicare hospital insurance trust funds, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Social Security and Medicare Lock-Box Act of 2001''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

(1) the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and strong economic growth have ended decades of deficit spending;

(2) the Government is able to meet its current obligations without using the social security and medicare surpluses;

(3) fiscal pressures will mount as an aging population increases the Government's obligations to provide retirement income and health services;

(4) social security and medicare hospital insurance surpluses should be used to reduce the debt held by the public until legislation is enacted that reforms social security and medicare;

(5) preserving the social security and medicare hospital insurance surpluses would restore confidence in the long-term financial integrity of social security and medicare; and

(6) strengthening the Government's fiscal position through debt reduction would increase national savings, promote economic growth, and reduce its interest payments.

(b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this Act to—

(1) prevent the surpluses of the social security and medicare hospital insurance trust funds from being used for any purpose other than providing retirement and health security; and

(2) use such surpluses to pay down the national debt until such time as medicare and social security reform legislation is enacted.

SEC. 3. PROTECTION OF SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE SURPLUSES.

(a) PROTECTION OF SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE SURPLUSES.—Title III of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''LOCK-BOX FOR SOCIAL SECURITY AND HOSPITAL INSURANCE SURPLUSES

''SEC. 316. (a) LOCK-BOX FOR SOCIAL SECURITY AND HOSPITAL INSURANCE SURPLUSES.—

''(1) CONCURRENT RESOLUTIONS ON THE BUDGET.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the Senate to consider any concurrent resolution on the budget, or an amendment thereto or conference report thereon, that would set forth a surplus for any fiscal year that is less than the surplus of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund for that fiscal year.

''(B) EXCEPTION.—(i) Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to the extent that a violation of such subparagraph would result from an assumption in the resolution, amendment, or conference report, as applicable, of an increase in outlays or a decrease in revenue relative to the baseline underlying that resolution for social security reform legislation or medicare reform legislation for any such fiscal year.

''(ii) If a concurrent resolution on the budget, or an amendment thereto or conference report thereon, would be in violation of subparagraph (A) because of an assumption of an increase in outlays or a decrease in revenue relative to the baseline underlying that resolution for social security reform legislation or medicare reform legislation for any such fiscal year, then that resolution shall include a statement identifying any such increase in outlays or decrease in revenue.

''(2) SPENDING AND TAX LEGISLATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—It shall not be in order in the House of Representatives or the Senate to consider any bill, joint resolution, amendment, motion, or conference report if—

''(i) the enactment of that bill or resolution, as reported;

''(ii) the adoption and enactment of that amendment; or

''(iii) the enactment of that bill or resolution in the form recommended in that conference report,

would cause the surplus for any fiscal year covered by the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget to be less than the surplus of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund for that fiscal year.

''(B) EXCEPTION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to social security reform legislation or medicare reform legislation.''.

''(b) ENFORCEMENT.—

''(1) BUDGETARY LEVELS WITH RESPECT TO CONCURRENT RESOLUTIONS ON THE BUDGET.—For purposes of enforcing any point of order under subsection (a)(1), the surplus for any fiscal year shall be—

''(A) the levels set forth in the later of the concurrent resolution on the budget, as reported, or in the conference report on the concurrent resolution on the budget; and

''(B) adjusted to the maximum extent allowable under all procedures that allow budgetary aggregates to be adjusted for legislation that would cause a decrease in the surplus for any fiscal year covered by the concurrent resolution on the budget (other than procedures described in paragraph (2)(A)(ii)).

''(2) CURRENT LEVELS WITH RESPECT TO SPENDING AND TAX LEGISLATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of enforcing subsection (a)(2), the current levels of the surplus for any fiscal year shall be—

''(i) calculated using the following assumptions—

''(I) direct spending and revenue levels at the baseline levels underlying the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget; and

''(II) for the budget year, discretionary spending levels at current law levels and, for outyears, discretionary spending levels at the baseline levels underlying the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget; and

''(ii) adjusted for changes in the surplus levels set forth in the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget pursuant to procedures in such resolution that authorize adjustments in budgetary aggregates for updated economic and technical assumptions in the mid-session report of the Director of the Congressional Budget Office. Such revisions shall be included in the first current level report on the congressional budget submitted for publication in the Congressional Record after the release of such mid-session report.

''(B) BUDGETARY TREATMENT.—Outlays (or receipts) for any fiscal year resulting from social security or medicare reform legislation in excess of the amount of outlays (or less than the amount of receipts) for that fiscal year set forth in the most recently agreed to concurrent resolution on the budget or the section 302(a) allocation for such legislation, as applicable, shall not be taken into account for purposes of enforcing any point of order under subsection (a)(2).

''(3) DISCLOSURE OF HI SURPLUS.—For purposes of enforcing any point of order under subsection (a), the surplus of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund for a fiscal year shall be the levels set forth in the later of the report accompanying the concurrent resolution on the budget (or, in the absence of such a report, placed in the Congressional Record prior to the consideration of such resolution) or in the joint explanatory statement of managers accompanying such resolution.

''(c) ADDITIONAL CONTENT OF REPORTS ACCOMPANYING BUDGET RESOLUTIONS AND OF JOINT EXPLANATORY STATEMENTS.—The report accompanying any concurrent resolution on the budget and the joint explanatory statement accompanying the conference report on each such resolution shall include the levels of the surplus in the budget for each fiscal year set forth in such resolution and of the surplus or deficit in the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund, calculated using the assumptions set forth in subsection (b)(2)(A).

''(d) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section:

''(1) The term 'medicare reform legislation' means a bill or a joint resolution to save Medicare that includes a provision stating the following: 'For purposes of section 316(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, this Act constitutes medicare reform legislation.'

''(2) The term 'social security reform legislation' means a bill or a joint resolution to save social security that includes a provision stating the following: 'For purposes of section 316(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, this Act constitutes social security reform legislation.'

''(e) WAIVER AND APPEAL.—Subsection (a) may be waived or suspended in the Senate only by an affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members, duly chosen and sworn. An affirmative vote of three-fifths of the Members of the Senate, duly chosen and sworn, shall be required in the Senate to sustain an appeal of the ruling of the Chair on a point of order raised under this section.