

of the budget—just as the President has—with a deep investment in our infrastructure needs because we know that that investment is one of the pillars of the strong economy.

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

#### CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me thank my colleague, Mr. POCAN, for yielding back and giving me this opportunity to address the people of the United States of America.

I am new around here, and so I like to generally listen and evaluate before I speak, and I only try to speak when I might have something to add of value.

If you drive through my district, which is the 12th Congressional District of the State of New Jersey and includes a lot of highways, byways, and bridges, you will see this iconic sign in the capital of New Jersey that says, "Trenton Makes, The World Takes."

It is a sign that points out the legendary industrial past of our community. However, this industrial revolution, it has passed us by, and it is a reminder of the employment that the city used to have.

Yes, the city of Trenton was once the place that you found employment. The Trenton Iron Company produced the wrought iron beams for the dome on this U.S. Capitol Building where we stand today. Trenton's John Roebling's Sons Company produced wire rope that was used to build the Brooklyn Bridge, the now-famous George Washington Bridge, and the Golden Gate suspension bridge in California.

Trenton was also known for its pottery-making, and even today, Trenton pottery can be found on display in museums around the world because of its artistry and superior craftsmanship.

Trenton's booming industry is responsible for the invention of even the oyster crackers, pork roll, Bayer aspirin, and felt-tipped markers.

Yet, today, Trenton, New Jersey, has a 15 percent unemployment rate. The city of Trenton's legendary industrial past does little for the thousands of unemployed workers searching for work today. The city has had a turn for the worse since the manufacturing sector has left and took with it great-paying jobs.

We are not alone in that problem and this crisis. The same can be said for Cleveland, Ohio, or Detroit, Michigan, or Gary, Indiana, or Philadelphia—to name just a few—towns which were once thriving centers of commerce where jobs were plentiful and unem-

ployment was rare. Today, these same towns face an unemployment crisis where securing work that enables a mother or a father to support a family is an elusive proposition.

At the same time we experience this employment crisis, we also have a crisis in our infrastructure. New Jersey has 39,213 total miles of road. We are small, but we have a lot of concrete, but 35 percent of the major roads are in deprived condition.

New Jersey has 6,566 bridges, but 36 percent of which are underfunded, considered structurally deficient, or functionally obsolete. Over 200 million trips are taken daily across deficient bridges in the Nation, but in total, one in nine of the Nation's bridges are rated as structurally deficient.

You may recall, in 2007, the I-35W Mississippi River bridge in Minneapolis—which had been categorized as structurally deficient—collapsed, killing 13 and injuring 145 people.

Mr. Speaker, our bridges are crumbling, and we need to invest in building and fixing them. The Nation's estimated 100,000 miles of levees can be found in all 50 States and the District of Columbia. The reliability of these levees is unknown in many cases, and the country has yet to establish a national levee safety program.

In 2005, New Orleans' levees failed to hold back the floodwaters of Hurricane Katrina, claiming the lives of more than 1,800 people and causing at least \$125 billion in economic damage. Public safety remains at risk from these aging structures, and the cost to repair or rehabilitate these levees is roughly estimated to be \$100 billion by the National Committee on Levee Safety.

Mr. Speaker, these numbers are reflective of what America has become. I take a look at our communities today, and I see the vestiges of our past.

I ask that we, as Congress, stop playing games, that we get to work for real this time, that we recognize that here we will have the opportunity to not only create safe infrastructure, not only to create safe bridges, not only to protect communities that are subject to flooding from levees, but we will also be able to create jobs.

There is no more meaningful social action program than a good job, and we know that government has a history for creating those jobs in times of need that help not only to build the strong infrastructure of this great Nation, but to put families back to work, to make sure that they are earning a wage for which they can take care of their children, help provide opportunities for their families, take care of their elderly, ensure that their children have access to quality education, and ensure that our future is strong and stable, based upon the fact that they have had good, predictable, dependable, decent-paying jobs with decent wages.

I look to our Congress, as many people do in this country, and I know who we really are, and I know that if we put our foot to the pedal, that if we decide

that we are going to put this country back on a strong footing—metaphorically, as well as literally—I know that if we are understanding that if we build out and support that middle-income layer, those people, the working people of this Nation, that we will create an economy that will grow and prosper everyone from the very, very top to the very, very bottom.

That is what we need to do right now in this country, from a bipartisan perspective, is to introduce, to advocate for, to debate, discuss, design, and develop an infrastructure bill with bipartisan support that signals to the working families and all families in this country that, A, we want to make sure that you are safe as you travel our highways and cross our bridges, that you are safe when you live near waterways and need to be protected with levees, and that you are given the opportunity to give back to your country, to build it, make it the strong country that it should be and, at the same time, create the kind of jobs that we need in order to grow our economy for everybody.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to speak to the American people today, and I yield back the balance of my time.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE LEGACY OF THE HONORABLE SAM JOHN- SON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, 42 years ago today, a POW came home from Vietnam.

This Special Order was put on by Mr. DOLD from Illinois. He will be here shortly.

A man I love came home that day 42 years ago. He is our colleague, SAM JOHNSON. SAM first saw combat in Korea, 62 hair-raising combat missions in an F-86 Sabre. He told me he used to race Buzz Aldrin to get to where the bad guys were to get the first kill of the day. That same Buzz Aldrin walked on the moon with Neil Armstrong.

SAM shot down one MIG in Korea. He came home and quickly became one of our best pilots in the Air Force. He joined the Thunderbirds, the Air Force's flight demonstration team. He flew solo and slot in the F-100C Super Sabre. He became an instructor pilot at the Air Force's Fighter Weapons School, their Top Gun.

SAM saw combat again in Vietnam. He flew the F-4 Phantom into combat. Coming back after dropping his bombs on North Korea, he was shot down. It was his 25th combat mission over Vietnam, April 15, 1966. SAM bailed out and fell into hell on earth. He was taken prisoner, confined for 6 years, 9 months, and 12 days.

This was a new war for POWs. It was a war of propaganda, so every minute