

Congressman Andy Kim (NJ-03)
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Testimony
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It doesn't matter where in the world you are, if you meet someone from New Jersey that finds out you're also from our state, you'll be greeted with the same question: which exit?

'Which exit' isn't just a question of geography, it's a statement that our infrastructure helps define us. It's a reminder that our transportation systems aren't just what get us from point A to point B, but what deliver us from the present to the future.

As we look at the future, it's hard not to examine our past. Years of neglect from Washington and increased use across our state have led to an infrastructure system that faces massive challenges today.

A recent report from the American Road and Transportation Builders Association showed that in my district alone, there are 44 structurally deficient bridges and another 155 in need of repair. What does that mean for the people I represent here in Congress? It means when they exit the New Jersey Turnpike on Exit 5 and go north to Route 130, they drive over three structurally deficient bridges. Just one of those bridges, over Pompeston Creek, has nearly 68,000 trips per day.

That means tens of thousands of parents trying to get their kids to school are doing so on a bridge that is a direct danger to their safety. It means tens of thousands of people trying to get to work are doing so on a bridge built when Calvin Coolidge was president. It means tens of thousands of seniors trying to get to their medical appointments are doing so on a reminder of Washington's failure to improve our basic infrastructure. All of this happens over the course of an average day in New Jersey.

For these parents, working people and seniors, the basic infrastructure that delivers us to the future in New Jersey isn't just the paved roads of the Turnpike and Parkway. It's not just our state roads and city roads that connect our homes to our businesses, schools and communities. It's our public transit, sea and airports that connect us with the rest of the country and the rest of the world.

If we are going to build connections – from community to community, from exit to exit, from New Jersey to the work and from the present to the future – we must build the infrastructure to make it happen.

No family in Cinnaminson should be endangered because of a bridge that is deemed unsafe. No business owner in Toms River should face the challenge of roads that make it difficult to move

goods and grow jobs. No senior should miss a medical checkup because they were failed by public transit.

We need a robust and bold infrastructure package that reflects the bold aspirations of the people I'm proud to represent. The benefits of bold action aren't just felt by Democrats or Republicans.

Building a new overpass over Route 539 won't just help Democrats or Republicans, it'll help make our Joint Base more secure and a stronger economic engine for our region. Fixing water infrastructure in Bordentown won't just help Democrats or Republicans, it'll make sure our children can drink from the faucet without fear. Expanding broadband access won't just help Democrats or Republicans, it'll make our businesses competitive in a global marketplace.

These are benefits that will be felt across our state, regardless of your party or your exit. I'm proud to stand up for investment in infrastructure because every exit should be one that leads to the future. I call on this committee and this Congress to take immediate steps to make that investment and ensure that the future is truly bright.