As I prepare to serve the people of the Eleventh Congressional District in a new term, I offer my thanks to the voters who placed their trust in me.

I extend my pledge to work hard for all the people of my district and to be your voice in Washington. I welcome the opportunity to serve my existing constituents and look forward to representing new communities and residents in the expanded district.

The physical boundaries may have changed but not my commitment to address the concerns that matter to Northeast Ohioans. Chief among those concerns is to foster economic growth that works for everyone.

We received encouraging news with the October jobs report. The U.S. Department of Labor announced the economy added 171,000 jobs last month and more Americans have resumed looking for work as well. October marked the 32nd consecutive month of job growth under President Obama's leadership. The daunting challenge remains however, to overcome the terrible job losses of the Great Recession. Unemployment remains in double digits for minorities: 14.3 percent for African Americans and 10 percent for Latinos compared to 7.9 percent for Whites. Some of that disparity can be explained by the fact that Black workers make up a disproportionate share of public sector workers. While the private sector began to recover over the past several years, state and local governments continued to face severe budget constraints and government employees were more vulnerable to drastic layoffs.

One of my top priorities remains creating the conditions that promote job growth in our own backyard. That means getting back on track in Congress to pass a jobs bill. Rebuilding our crumbling roads and bridges as well as replacing aging water plants and schools can't wait. Experience has taught us that investing in infrastructure is one of the fastest ways to jumpstart the economy.

I am also concerned that our citizens are prepared for jobs of the future. That involves not only workforce training, but also strengthening educational opportunities from pre-school through grad school. These issues have my attention. I am committed to addressing our federal deficit *r esponsibly*
and that means we must not forsake the basic needs of our most vulnerable citizens. We cannot be a moral or prosperous nation any other way.

According to the Census Bureau, 40 percent of the children I represent lived in poverty in 2011. I will continue to advocate for their needs and work to improve federal programs that address things like school nutrition and access to a quality education. We must remember the needs of ex-offenders who want to work and obtain the training to become productive citizens.

I also remain a staunch defender of older Americans who, after a lifetime of hard work, count on Social Security and access to affordable health care provided through Medicare and Medicaid. I intend to push back hard against any attempts to voucherize Medicare.

There is much work to do. The road may be rocky but I'm ready for the journey, so the great people of our district and our nation can truly move forward.