

events or familiar tasks. Attempts to perform basic daily functions can turn into dangerous situations, and the disease eventually forces the afflicted to become totally dependent on others.

Dementia, an umbrella term used to describe the loss of cognitive or intellectual function, is commonly associated with Alzheimer's. Caused by a number of diseases, dementia refers to memory loss, having difficulty making use of simple words, and poor or decreased judgement. In addition, dementia creates problems with abstract thinking and can result in personality changes.

Veterans are widely affected by dementia in general and Alzheimer's specifically. Nearly 8 million, 37% of the total veterans population, suffer from dementia caused by Alzheimer's. Due to the severity of this condition, and the inability of those afflicted to care for themselves, specialized care is needed.

Currently the Veterans Alzheimer's/Dementia Program includes both inpatient and outpatient clinics. Ranging from short-term behavioral stabilization to long-term comfort and supportive care, these clinics are designed to treat patients while research is conducted on their condition and treatment. However, with an aging population and corresponding rise in dementia cases, the resources of our veterans nursing homes are being strained. Currently there are a very small number of facilities dedicated to treating patients with Alzheimer's. In addition, the traditional nursing home model does not provide the most effective method of treatment.

While Alzheimer's remains incurable, progress is being made. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) researchers have discovered a genetic association to the development of Alzheimer's and they continue to pioneer dementia research. However, there are still only three FDA-approved drugs that may temporarily relieve some symptoms of the disease. Clearly, more dedicated research should be encouraged.

Research and treatment provided through dementia-specific nursing homes will enhance the development of appropriate care options. To encourage such homes to be leased and constructed, the Veterans of Foreign Wars has urged the VA to establish a demonstration project for this purpose. I am pleased to support the VFW's Resolution 639 by offering this resolution today. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this effort.

TRIBUTE TO RETIRING MAYOR OF  
CROCKER, MO, THE HONORABLE  
NORMA LEA MIHALEVICH

**HON. IKE SKELTON**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 6, 2001*

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that a remarkable public servant, the Honorable Norma Lea Mihalevich, Mayor of Crocker, MO, will retire from her post on April 7, 2001.

A graduate of Waynesville High School and the Missouri State Teachers College, Norma Lea Mihalevich has dedicated her life to public service. For the past 23 years, she has diligently served the citizens of Crocker, MO, as their mayor. During her tenure in office, she

has always unselfishly devoted her time and energy to the betterment of her community.

In addition to her service as mayor, Mrs. Mihalevich has been a member of the Crocker R-2 Board of Education, first being elected in 1952. During her time on the School Board, she served on the Board of Directors of the Missouri School Boards Association, receiving their 1998 "Recognition of Commitment" award. Additionally, in 1986, she was recognized as a "Pioneer in Education" by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Mrs. Mihalevich, a member of the Crocker Baptist Church for 59 years, has also worked for community betterment by serving as a member of the Pulaski County Hospital Board, the Pulaski County Health Department Home Health Agency, and the Pulaski Board for the Handicapped.

Norma Lea Mihalevich is truly a role model for young public servants. As she prepares for quieter times with her husband, Dr. John Mihalevich, I am certain that all Members of the House will join me in paying tribute to Mrs. Mihalevich's outstanding commitment to public service.

PRIME RECRUITING GROUND FOR  
ACADEMIES

**HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 6, 2001*

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, every year, more high school seniors from the 11th Congressional District trade in varsity jackets for Navy peacoats, Air Force flight suits, and Army brass buckles than any other district in the county. But this is nothing new—our area has repeatedly sent an above-average proportion of its sons and daughters to the Nation's military academies for decades.

This shouldn't come as a surprise. The educational excellence of our area is well known and has long been a magnet for families looking for the best environment in which to raise their children. Our graduates are skilled not only in mathematics, science, and social studies, but also have solid backgrounds in sports, debate teams, and other extracurricular activities. This diverse upbringing makes military academy recruiters sit up and take note—in fact, many recruiters know our towns and schools by name.

Since the 1830's, Members of Congress have enjoyed meeting, talking with, and nominating these superb young people to our military academies. But how did this process evolve?

In 1843, when West Point was the sole academy, Congress ratified the nominating process and became directly involved in the makeup of our military's leadership. This was not an act of an imperial Congress bent on controlling every aspect of the Government. Rather, the procedure still used today was, and is, one further check and balance in our democracy. It was originally designed to weaken and divide political coloration in the officer corps, provide geographical balance to our armed services, and to make the officer corps more resilient to unfettered nepotism that handicapped European armies.

In 1854, Representative Gerritt Smith of New York added a new component to the

academy nomination process—the academy review board. This was the first time a Member of Congress appointed prominent citizens from his district to screen applicants and assist with the serious duty of nominating candidates for academy admission. Today, I am honored to continue this wise tradition in my service to the 11th Congressional District.

The Academy Review Board is composed of nine local citizens who have shown exemplary service to New Jersey, to their communities, and to the continued excellence of education in our area—many are veterans. Though from diverse backgrounds and professions, they all share a common dedication to seeing that the best qualified and motivated graduates attend our academies. And, as is true for most volunteer panels, their service goes largely unnoticed.

I would like to take a moment to recognize these men and women and to thank them publicly for participating in this important panel. Being on the board requires hard work and an objective mind. Members have the responsibility of interviewing upwards of 50 outstanding high school seniors every year in the academy review process.

The nomination process follows a general timetable. High school seniors mail personal information directly to the Military Academy, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy once they become interested in attending. Information includes academic achievement, college entry test scores, and other activities. At this time, they also inform their Representative of their desire to be nominated.

The academies then assess the applicants, rank them based on the data supplied, and return the files to my office with their notations. In mid-December, our Academy Review Board interviews all of the applicants over the course of 2 days. They assess a student's qualifications and analyze character, desire to serve, and other talents that may be hidden on paper.

Last year, the board interviewed over 30 applicants. Nominations included 10 to the Naval Academy, 7 to the Military Academy, 4 to the Air Force Academy, and 5 to the Merchant Marine Academy—the Coast Guard Academy does not use the Congressional nomination process. The Board then forwards their recommendations to the academies by January 31, where recruiters review files and notify applicants and my office of their final decisions on admission.

It is both reassuring and rewarding to know that many of our military officers hail from our hometowns or close by. When we consider the role of these officers in peace or war, we can rest easier knowing that the best and brightest are in command. Wherever they are sent, be that Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti or the Persian Gulf, many of these officers have academy training.

And while a few people may question the motivations and ambitions of some young people, the academy review process shows that the large majority of our graduates are just as highly motivated as the guidance from loving parents, dedicated teachers and schools, and from trusted clergy and rabbis. Indeed, every time I visit a school, speak at a college, or meet a young academy nominee, I am constantly reminded that we as a nation are blessed with fine young men and women.