

and take note—indeed, 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 Government. Rather, the procedure still used today was, and is, a 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 and 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 six local citizens who have shown exemplary service to New Jersey, to their communities, and to the continued excellence of education in our area—and all are veterans. Though from diverse backgrounds and professions, they all share a common dedication that the best qualified and motivated graduates attend our academies. And, as true for most volunteer panels, their service goes largely unnoticed.

I would like to take a moment to recognize these men and women and 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 my office 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 late November, 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.

This year the board interviewed over 40 applicants. The Board's recommendations were then forwarded to the academies by January 31, where recruiters reviewed files and notified applicants and my office of their final decision on admission.

As these highly motivated and talented young men and women go through the academy nominating process, never let us forget the sacrifice they are preparing to make: to

defend our country and protect our citizens. This holds especially true at a time when our nation is fighting the war against terrorism. Whether it is in Afghanistan or other hot spots around the world, no doubt we are constantly reminded that wars are fought by the young. And, while our military missions are both important and dangerous, it is reassuring to know that we continue to put America's best and brightest in command.

ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2015 11TH
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
AIR FORCE ACADEMY

Gina-Marie Arrabito, West Orange, West Orange H.S.; John P. Dennehy, Rockaway, Morris Hills H.S.; Fredrik A. Eriksson, Woodland Park, Passaic Valley Regional H.S.; Joshua J. Fortes, Parsippany, Parsippany H.S.; Christian O. Hedengren, Brookside, St. Peters Preparatory; Leland E. Hemgren, Boonton, Mountain Lakes H.S.; Liam R. Sax, Sparta, Pope John XXIII Regional H.S.

MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

Travis Z. Feather, Pine Brook, Bergen Catholic H.S.; Paul T. Femia, Kinnelon, Valley Forge Military Academy; Maria F. Garcia, East Hanover, Hanover Park H.S.; Colleen M. Griffin, Kinnelon, Kinnelon H.S.; Christian A. Marini, Kinnelon, Seton Hall Preparatory; Luke H. Mayer, Morristown, Delbarton School; Christopher J.L. Morgan, West Orange, West Orange H.S.; Kelly A. Smith, Roseland, West Essex H.S.

NAVAL ACADEMY

Seth M. Abbott, Randolph, Randolph H.S.; Mark G. Brown, Brookside, West Morris Mendham H.S.; James E. Crimmins, Madison, Chaminade H.S., NY; Joshua C. Corbett, Mendham, Gill St. Bernards School; Jacob S. Ferraro, Kinnelon, Kinnelon H.S.; Aaron J. Hanko, Montville, Naval Academy Preparatory School; Warren J. Lee, East Hanover, Oratory Preparatory School; Jay Oh, Madison, Madison H.S.; Austin J. Tighe, Little Falls, Seton Hall Preparatory; Jacob T. Valente, Wayne, Wayne Valley H.S.

MILITARY ACADEMY

Matthew E. Babich, Wayne, Regis H.S. NY, NY; Alexandra R.K. Bruno, Little Falls, Passaic Valley H.S.; Jonathan P. Davis, Chatham, Chatham H.S.; Alexander C. Lagasca, Sparta, Sparta H.S.; John M. Lowe, Parsippany, Gill St. Bernards School; Angela E. Martone, Lincoln Park, Trinity Christian School; Richard R. O'Connor, New Vernon, Miami University; Ivan V. Peters, Boonton, U.S. Army, Fort Bragg; James E. Schoch, Sparta, Sparta H.S.; Austin J.C. Williams, Verona, Verona H.S.

IN RECOGNITION OF RABBI
DONALD A. WEBER

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 27, 2015

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Rabbi Donald Weber on his 30th Anniversary as Rabbi of Temple Rodeph Torah in Marlboro, New Jersey. Rabbi Weber is an outstanding leader of Temple Rodeph Torah and an active member of the community whose contributions are truly deserving of this body's recognition.

Under Rabbi Weber's leadership, the Temple Rodeph Torah congregation has grown from 66 families in 1984 to more than 350 today. He also began the TRT Cares program

to provide help to those in the community facing financial hardships, which earned the Fair Award for Social Justice in 2011.

In addition to his efforts within Temple Rodeph Torah, Rabbi Weber is also an active member of the community. He has served as the Marlboro Township Police Chaplain since 2005, is a founding member and Board Chair of the Marlboro Township Ethics Board and is a life member of the Morganville First Aid Squad. He remains an advocate for hunger issues and personal rights, serving as a member and co-chair of the Jewish Leaders' Council of MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger and a trustee of Planned Parenthood of Monmouth County, among others.

Prior to becoming the first full-time rabbi of Temple Rodeph Torah, Rabbi Weber served as Volunteer Chaplain and Supervisor of the Pediatrics Floor at Memorial-Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York, New York and as Associate Rabbi of Temple Beth David in Commack, New York. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis University and his Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters and Honorary Doctor of Divinity from Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in celebrating the 30th Anniversary of Rabbi Donald Weber and recognizing him for his dedication to community outreach and social action.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 27, 2015

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 92, I was detained due to an unavoidable conflict.

Had I been present, I would have voted aye.

TEXANS KNOW BARBECUE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 27, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Killen's Barbecue, a Pearland, TX legendary institution, for being named in the top 10 in GQ Magazine's "25 Most Outstanding Restaurants of 2015."

All due respect to other states, Texans know barbecue better than anyone! Don't let the never-ending line to get in stop you from tasting a little bit of heaven. It's well worth the wait. Chef Ronnie Killen is a true master and his culinary skills are keeping true Texas barbecue alive.

I commend Chef Killen for sharing his true Texas Barbecue with the great folks of TX—22. On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional of Texas, congratulations again to Killen's Barbecue for being named one of GQ's "25 Most Outstanding Restaurants of 2015."