

all American's living with Alzheimer's and other dementias. We look forward to working with you to advance this important bipartisan bill.

Sincerely,

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION,
ALZHEIMER'S IMPACT
MOVEMENT,
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHRONIC DISEASE,
DIRECTORS, NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF
COUNTIES.

Ms. COLLINS. I am now very pleased to yield to the coauthor of this important bill. Senator CORTEZ MASTO has been an extraordinary member of the Senate Special Committee on Aging. She attends every single hearing, which is amazing, given our schedules, and she contributes so much to the debate and questioning in those hearings. I am delighted to join in this effort with her.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I rise to thank my colleague from Maine, whose amazing work as chair of the Aging Committee continues to inspire me.

I also rise to share a story that is very personal to me. It is a story about one of the smartest people whom I have known, my grandmother Katherine, whom I was named after. She was the daughter of an Italian immigrant and his Italian-American wife. She was exactly the kind of person you think of when you think of an Italian grandmother. If you have ever had one, you know that she loves to feed people and invite the whole family—aunts, uncles, cousins, everyone—over to her house for dinner on Sunday nights. The other 6 days of the week, she worked on volunteer projects throughout Las Vegas with her sorority, Beta Sigma Phi.

She never graduated from college, but she was a leader in our community, and she was always reading. If you walked into her house, it was full of books. In fact, the first thing that you saw when you walked into her house was, on one wall, floor to ceiling, a bookcase with all of the books that she had read.

She was brilliant. She was one of my greatest inspirations. Her work in our community in Las Vegas is one of the reasons that I decided to pursue a career in public service.

Unfortunately, in the 1990s, my grandmother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. At first, you could barely notice a difference. There were small things, things that could happen to anyone—lost keys, mismatched socks, books left in odd places. Then a woman who had spent her entire life loving to cook for her family and grandchildren had suddenly stopped cooking.

Over the next 10 years, she got progressively worse. We could see the changes in her every single day, but our lives changed too. My grandfather became her caregiver. My mother became her caregiver. My aunt became

her caregiver. My cousins and I and my sister all became caregivers. That is what happens when someone is diagnosed. It does not affect just one person; it affects an entire family.

There is a common misconception that people who are suffering from Alzheimer's are not aware of what they are losing, that their memories are gone but not missed. That was not the case for my grandmother. I do not think it is the case for anyone who is struggling with this disease. My grandmother frequently had these moments of clarity when it was clear that the losses were just as painful for her as they were for all of us.

One thing that happens to many people with Alzheimer's is that they tend to wander. They wander away from home or they get lost. She had had one of those moments of clarity after she had wandered away from home one day, and the entire family had spent an afternoon looking for her in our neighborhood. My aunt and I had found her and had gone to pick her up in a car. I will never forget it, as I sat in the back seat while my aunt drove.

My grandmother, who had been seated on the front passenger's side, asked my aunt: Why am I doing this? Why am I in my housecoat and slippers? Why am I doing this?

My aunt looked at her and she said: Mom, you are sick. You have something they call Alzheimer's, and that means that it is impacting your brain and your memories, and you are forgetting.

We were so powerless. We couldn't do anything but make her comfortable and bring her home.

For many, many families who are dealing with Alzheimer's, they have gone through those same moments—those moments when they are dealing with their loved ones either trying to explain to them what is happening or giving them comfort because they know their memories are gone, and they want to make sure they are giving them the comfort they need and they deserve.

We know, unfortunately, that there is no cure for Alzheimer's. My grandmother passed away, as many people with Alzheimer's do, when her illness got so bad that she lost the ability to eat or drink, but the experience of caring for my grandmother opened my eyes to the true impact of this disease. I saw that when one person is diagnosed, whole families' lives are transformed too. I think about my grandmother every day. Every day, I return to some piece of wisdom or guidance that she shared with me. I am committed now to honoring her memory by fighting to prevent Alzheimer's and to provide caregivers with the support they need and deserve.

When my grandmother was first diagnosed, we did not understand Alzheimer's like we do today. We did not have enough healthcare programs for it or support for the caregivers. It was seen as an individual disease that

struck at random, with no cure and no hope. Although there is still no cure, we know now that there are things that we can do to help to keep the brain healthy longer and possibly reduce the risk of Alzheimer's and that there are things that we can do now to promote prevention.

For those who are already living with Alzheimer's and for their caregivers, like my family was for my grandmother, there are things that we can do to dramatically improve their experiences and to help lessen some of that burden. Today there are things we can do to invest in finding that cure for Alzheimer's. It is just a petri dish away, but we have to believe that it is there and that we can continue and support that investment. I have visited the Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health in Las Vegas and met with its director, Dr. Jeffrey Cummings. I have seen the incredible work they have done, including their methods for the early detection of Alzheimer's, which simply did not exist only a few years ago. Yet education in the community and the spreading of best practices still lag behind.

There is no longer any doubt that this is a public health crisis. That is why I am so grateful and proud to be sitting on a committee and working with a chairwoman, my colleague from Maine, who has made an effort here in Congress to really bring attention to Alzheimer's disease and to help to fight for funding and investment in a cure.

I am proud to join my colleagues from Maine, West Virginia, and Virginia in introducing legislation that is known as the BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act. This bill will create Centers of Excellence that will be dedicated to promoting effective interventions and educating the public on Alzheimer's disease, cognitive decline, and brain health. It will provide grants to State and local health departments to build the infrastructure that is necessary to address this public health crisis, and it will collect the data that is necessary to keep pushing the frontiers of what we know about this disease.

I urge my colleagues to support this vital, bipartisan piece of legislation that has the potential of having a positive impact on millions of Americans across this country.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1579. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. JOHNSON (for himself and Mrs. MCCASKILL)) proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1370, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to issue Department of Homeland Security-wide guidance and develop training programs as part of the Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign, and for other purposes.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1579. Mr. MCCONNELL (for Mr. JOHNSON (for himself and Mrs. MCCASKILL)) proposed an amendment to the