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## Senate

### NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2003

(Continued)

AMENDMENT NO. 4060

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 4060 that I offer on behalf of myself and Senator SMITH of Oregon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oregon [Mr. WYDEN], for himself and Mr. SMITH of Oregon, proposes an amendment numbered 4060.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To authorize with an offset, \$4,800,000 for personnel and procurement for the Oregon Army National Guard for purposes of Search and Rescue (SAR) and Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC) missions in adverse weather conditions)

At the end of subtitle A of title X, add the following:

**SEC. 1010. AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNTS FOR OREGON ARMY NATIONAL GUARD FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE AND MEDICAL EVACUATION MISSIONS IN ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS.**

(a) INCREASE IN AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR ARMY PROCUREMENT.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 101(1) for procurement for the Army for aircraft is hereby increased by \$3,000,000.

(b) AVAILABILITY.—Of the amount authorized to be appropriated by section 101(1) for procurement for the Army for aircraft, as increased by subsection (a), \$3,000,000 shall be available for the upgrade of three UH-60L Blackhawk helicopters of the Oregon Army National Guard to the capabilities of UH-60Q Search and Rescue model helicopters, including Star Safire FLIR, Breeze-Eastern External Rescue Hoist, and Air Methods COTS Medical Systems upgrades, in order to improve the utility of such UH-60L Blackhawk helicopters in search and rescue and medical evacuation missions in adverse weather conditions.

(c) INCREASE IN AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL.—The

amount authorized to be appropriated by section 421 for military personnel is hereby increased by \$1,800,000.

(d) AVAILABILITY.—Of the amount authorized to be appropriated by section 421 for military personnel, as increased by subsection (d), \$1,800,000 shall be available for up to 26 additional personnel for the Oregon Army National Guard.

(e) OFFSET.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 301(a)(1) for operation and maintenance for the Army is hereby reduced by \$4,800,000, with the amount of the reduction to be allocated to Base Operations Support (Service-wide Support).

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, the Pacific Northwest must have a search and rescue capability. The vast expanses of Federal land in our part of the country mean our citizens constantly face the risk of disasters and accidents, far from help. Local communities, many of them with tiny populations, do not have the resources to provide search and rescue services to the extraordinarily large surrounding wilderness areas.

The amendment I offer this afternoon on behalf of myself and Senator SMITH is a compromise. It would not have been our first choice. In an effort to work with our colleagues and appeal to our colleagues on a bipartisan basis, we offer this compromise to preserve a search and rescue capability in our region. Without this capability, the Pacific Northwest faces the certain loss of lives for disasters, fires, and accidents that are unique to our region.

This amendment authorizes a total of \$4.8 million to the Oregon National Guard to upgrade three Blackhawk helicopters of the National Oregon Guard to the capabilities of the UH-60Q search and rescue helicopters similar to upgrades in the past. It would increase the authorization for military personnel by \$1.8 million to ensure the Oregon Guard can respond to emergencies that require rapid medical attention.

Particularly during this season we are concerned about the host of possibilities that can strike our local com-

munities, tragedies we have already seen won in recent difficulties in our region. We cannot afford to play Russian roulette with the safety, health, and security of our citizens.

I urge my colleagues to support the Wyden-Smith amendment that we have worked on with both the majority and the minority for many days.

I reserve my time to speak later in the debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. I thank my colleague for being a partner in this cause to preserve in the Pacific Northwest a search and rescue capability.

Mr. President, I rise today to introduce an amendment with Senator WYDEN to preserve a truly invaluable search and rescue capability in the Pacific Northwest.

On May 30, all eyes in Oregon and across the nation watched as brave Oregonians put themselves in harms way to rescue climbers on Mt. Hood.

The rescuers included members of the Oregon National Guard, the Portland Mountain Rescue, and the Air Force Reserve 939th Air Rescue Wing, whose members have been lauded for scores of rescues on Mt. Hood and the Oregon Coast, not to mention rescues in our neighboring state of Washington. In fact this rescue wing volunteers for these types of rescues.

Recently, nine climbers were swept into a 20-foot deep crevasse on Mt. Hood. Tragically, three of the climbers did not survive, but the skills of the rescuers ensured that others would survive.

This rescue highlighted the skills of the Rescue Wing and the importance Oregonians place on the Wing's capabilities in the region. While adverse wind conditions most likely sent one of the helicopters into an inevitable crash, the highly skilled pilot of the 939th ensured that the crew survived and that all on the ground were unharmed.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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