

Maholluck was cut off from Staff Sergeant Binnie and Staff Sergeant Feurst, so he radioed for help.

Back at the main perimeter, Brendan O'Connor got the call and put a team together to go get his wounded soldiers. When Brendan's team got to the area, the Taliban had taken positions along the route to the wounded soldiers, leaving Brendan only one path—an exposed field. Brendan instructed his team to take up positions to support the wounded and started on his mission to save the lives of these soldiers.

At first, Brendan started crawling through an open field with his gear on. He quickly realized this wasn't going to work. So under a hail of small arms, RPG, and machine gun fire, Brendan removed all his armor and crawled through an open field to get to the two wounded. Brendan couldn't locate the two soldiers by sight, only by calling out. And as he heard them, he would get closer and closer.

When he arrived at the two wounded, he had to make a quick decision about Joe's injuries, which were life threatening. Brendan quickly got Staff Sergeant Binnie taken care of and instructed him to crawl through a culvert to get to safety. Staff Sergeant Feurst wasn't so easy. He was unconscious and unable to move. Brendan pulled him down as far as he could into the culvert. He started to drag him, but he realized he couldn't drag him the entire way.

As if the actions of Brendan and his team weren't heroic enough at this point, the next part of this account will send chills down your spine.

At this time during the fight, it was estimated that nearly 300 Taliban fighters had engaged the approximately 15-member U.S. force. I say approximately because several Afghan Army members who originally accompanied Brendan's team had fled by this point. As Brendan's natural cover was coming to an end, he pulled Joe on to his shoulder, and he ran across an area while 300 Taliban fighters were shooting at him. God was watching Brendan that day. God saw one man risk his life to save another, and he saw fit to keep Brendan from harm as he carried a wounded U.S. soldier to safety. Unfortunately, Joe Feurst died soon after Brendan got him back due to massive blood loss. SSG Matt Binnie survived because of Brendan's leadership and courage under fire.

The battle that had gone on for nearly 3 days was coming to an end at this point. U.S. forces had air support, which escorted them out of the area. All told, the U.S.-led force killed 125 Taliban fighters and only lost 2 of their own, with 1 wounded. They weren't able to capture or kill the warlord that time; however, due to the losses to the Taliban that day in that strike, U.S. forces got him several weeks later.

For their heroics in combat, MSG Tom Maholluck and SSG Matt Binnie were awarded the Silver Star. SSG Joe

Feurst was awarded the Bronze Star. Brendan O'Connor was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his valor. It was the first time a member of the 7th Special Forces Group had been awarded the medal since 1964.

It is an honor to have Brendan and his family in Washington today. He is joined by his beautiful wife Meg and their children, Ryan, Colin, Darby, and Dillon.

It is this type of story that we rarely hear about on the nightly news, but this story was so amazing that "60 Minutes" felt compelled to do a piece on it after the soldiers arrived back home. MSG Brendan O'Connor is a person held in the highest regard by other warriors who have proudly served this country. He is a soldier who truly understands the price of freedom. The Senate salutes MSG Brendan O'Connor today.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 2892, which the clerk will state by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2892) making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 1373

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Mr. REID. Madam President, I call up the amendment at the desk on behalf of Senator BYRD and Senator INOUE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] for Mr. BYRD and Mr. INOUE, and Mrs. MURRAY, proposes an amendment numbered 1373.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the substitute amendment.

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

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "amendments Submitted.")

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, we now turn to the fiscal year 2010 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill. The chairman of the Homeland Security Subcommittee, Senator ROBERT C. BYRD, is home from the hospital and is improving daily and is

eager to return to the Senate as soon as he can.

He has been in regular consultations with his staff in the development of the bill that was approved by the Appropriations Committee on June 18 by a vote of 30-0. This is a bipartisan bill. I thank the ranking member on the Appropriations Committee, Senator THAD COCHRAN, and the ranking member on the subcommittee, Senator GEORGE VOINOVICH, for their cooperation in the development of the bill. I also thank the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator DANIEL K. INOUE, for his support.

The establishment of the Department of Homeland Security after the devastating events of September 11, 2001, was one of the most ambitious Federal reorganizations since the Department of Defense was created following World War II. Regrettably, it was the official position of the Bush administration that the Department could be created at no cost to the taxpayer. This translated into a Department with aging assets, an inability to prepare for and respond to natural disasters and future threats, and significant management and employee morale problems.

In response, Congress, on a bipartisan basis, increased homeland security spending by an average of \$2 billion per year above the President's request. These increases were invested in border security, chemical security, port security, transit security, aviation security, and cyber security. Congress also ensured State and local partners in homeland security received adequate resources to equip and train our first responders. These investments have paid off, making our Nation more secure and making us better prepared for any disaster. But we have much more work to do.

The committee-reported bill totals \$42.9 billion of discretionary budget authority, an increase of 7 percent over fiscal year 2009.

Chairman BYRD has set five major goals for the bill: No. 1, securing our borders and enforcing our immigration laws; No. 2, protecting the American people from terrorist threats and other vulnerabilities; No. 3, preparing and responding to all hazards, including natural disasters; No. 4, supporting our State, local, tribal and private sector partners in homeland security with resources and information; and finally, giving the Department the management tools it needs to succeed.

To meet these goals, the bill provides \$10.2 billion for Customs and Border Protection, including an initiative to combat drugs and violence on the Southwest border; \$5.4 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, including increased funds for the Southwest border initiative, and the Secure Communities and Criminal Alien Programs, which identify dangerous criminal aliens for deportation when they are released from prison.

It includes \$7.7 billion for the Transportation Security Administration, including a \$513 million increase for the