

Brandon Mullins inherited a proud military tradition. He was the third generation in his family to wear the Nation's uniform. His father Thomas was a military police officer, and as a child Brandon and his brother Shaun used to love to play with his dad's old MP mementoes. They also loved to play on a World War II-era tank that was on display in a park near Brandon's childhood home.

As a kid, Brandon loved sports. Hockey was his favorite. He and his family enjoyed going to Nashville Predators games, but Brandon's favorite team was the Detroit Red Wings.

Brandon also played hockey in high school and was the MVP of his league. He thrived under pressure. One time, Brandon's team found itself in a shoot-out situation for victory in a high-stakes playoff game. Brandon asked his coach to put him in as the goalie. He wanted a chance to step up in a clutch moment for his teammates and, sure enough, his team won the game.

Brandon also enjoyed being outdoors. He was a hunter, a fisherman, and a hiker. His family described him as fearless when it came to physical challenges. He started rollerblading at the age of 4. He is remembered as high spirited, generous, and very popular.

Brandon's family was certainly not surprised when Brandon grew up and enlisted in the military. "He wanted the tough job," his mother Catherine said. "He wanted to fight. He was competitive."

Brandon's brother Shaun had enlisted before him, and so in February 2010 Brandon enlisted in the Army. He deployed to Afghanistan in May of 2011 with Company C, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, based out of Fort Wainright, AK. Once again, he thrived under pressure, this time in the demanding task of fighting for our country.

"Brandon matured very quickly," his father Thomas said.

From the time he entered basic training . . . you could see a big change in his life. He was headed in the right direction with his life.

Brandon loved being in the Army, and would send letters back home about how cool basic training was. Brandon's fellow soldiers quickly took to the new recruit from Owensboro.

"I can honestly say I've never met anyone like Mullins," said SSG Matthew Mills, Brandon's squad leader.

SPC Deroderick Jackson, another one of Brandon's fellow soldiers, said this:

He was just a big help to me. Every time he saw I had a hard time, he made me smile and told me to get it together. On a mission with the Afghan National Army, I was real tired and they were going real fast and [Brandon] said, "You've got this, brother!"

Another fellow soldier, COL Todd R. Wood, recalls that Brandon:

. . . was best described as the epitome of selfless service—he took on details others did not want, he did not complain, he just did it,

and usually with a smile. He carried the heaviest loads and helped out everyone he could. He was always concerned about others first.

Brandon's fellow soldiers also recall he had a fun side. "I remember he was really goofy," said Private First Class Adam Baldrige.

One time I remember we got in trouble and we were getting smoked until we almost had a tear rolling down our cheeks. He just turned and looked at me and said, "Just remember, they can't smoke rocks."

We are thinking of Brandon's loved ones today, as I recount his story for my colleagues in the Senate, including his parents Thomas and Catherine Mullins, his brother PFC Shaun Erik Mullins, his sister Bethany Rose Mullins, and many other beloved family members and friends.

This past September 11 was the tenth anniversary of the brutal terrorist attacks that ushered in a new era of military readiness and resolve for America. On that day, the Mullins family held a memorial service for Brandon. More than 800 people came to show their respects.

The funeral procession, led by 576 motorcycles, traveled from Good Shepherd Church to Owensboro Memorial Gardens at a slow, somber pace—taking 1 hour to drive 11 miles.

On that day, CPT Sean J. Allred of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, wrote Thomas and Catherine Mullins a letter.

I hope that through writing this letter you may know how your son lived as a warrior and will continue to live in our hearts and in our victories.

Know that your son was a brother to all men in his Platoon and all who knew him . . . Brandon was a credit to you and how you raised him. I am forever indebted to him and will honor his memory in future actions.

Captain Allred's sentiments are shared by this Senate. Our Nation can never repay the debt owed to Specialist Mullins or the sacrifice he made that weighs so heavily on his family. But we can honor his service and ensure that he will never be forgotten by his country. It is thanks to heroes such as SPC Brandon S. Mullins that America enjoys the freedoms we do today.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 2012

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2112, which the clerk will report by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food

and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reid (for Inouye) amendment No. 738, in the nature of a substitute.

Reid (for Webb) modified amendment No. 750 (to amendment No. 738), to establish the National Criminal Justice Commission.

Kohl amendment No. 755 (to amendment No. 738), to require a report on plans to implement reductions to certain salaries and expenses accounts.

Durbin (for Murray) amendment No. 772 (to amendment No. 738), to strike a section providing for certain exemptions from environmental requirements for the reconstruction of highway facilities damaged by natural disasters or emergencies.

Landrieu amendment No. 781 (to amendment No. 738), to prohibit the approval of certain farmer program loans.

Vitter modified amendment No. 769 (to amendment No. 738), to prohibit the Food and Drug Administration from preventing an individual not in the business of importing a prescription drug from importing an FDA-approved prescription drug from Canada.

Coburn amendment No. 791 (to amendment No. 738), to prohibit the use of funds to provide direct payments to persons or legal entities with an average adjusted gross income in excess of \$1,000,000.

Coburn modified amendment No. 792 (to amendment No. 738), to end payments to landlords who are endangering the lives of children and needy families.

Ayotte amendment No. 753 (to amendment No. 738), to prohibit the use of funds for the prosecution of enemy combatants in article III courts of the United States.

Crapo amendment No. 814 (to amendment No. 738), to provide for the orderly implementation of the provisions of title VII of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

Merkley amendment No. 879 (to amendment No. 738), to prohibit amounts appropriated under this Act to carry out parts A and B of subtitle V of title 49, United States Code, from being expended unless all the steel, iron, and manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States.

Moran amendment No. 815 (to amendment No. 738), to improve the bill.

Bingaman modified amendment No. 771 (to amendment No. 738), to provide an additional \$4,476,000, with an offset, for the Office of the United States Trade Representative to investigate trade violations committed by other countries and to enforce the trade laws of the United States and international trade agreements, which will fund the Office at the level requested in the President's budget and in H.R. 2596, as reported by the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

Blunt (for Grassley) amendment No. 860 (to amendment No. 738), to ensure accountability in Federal grant programs administered by the Department of Justice.

Menendez amendment No. 857 (to amendment No. 738), to extend loan limits for programs of the government-sponsored enterprises, the Federal Housing Administration, and the Veterans Affairs' Administration.

Lee motion to recommit.

Sessions amendment No. 810 (to amendment No. 738), to prohibit the use of funds to allow categorical eligibility for the supplemental nutritional assistance program.

Blunt (for DeMint) amendment No. 763 (to amendment No. 738), to prohibit the use of funds to implement regulations regarding the removal of essential-use designation for epinephrine used in oral pressurized metered-dose inhalers.