



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

Happy Holidays From Senator Jack M. Martins

JACK M. MARTINS December 21, 2012

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I received an e-mail from Afghanistan in late October – actually from one of our local guys from New Hyde Park who is currently stationed there.

He serves in what is uniquely known as one of the Navy’s “Force Reintegration Cells.” It’s not what you might think, though. His unit actually distributes small grants and community funding for local projects, most of the time using the former insurgent fighters as laborers on the projects. Each leaves the fight “honorably” and each represents one less fighter or suicide bomber for the Taliban. As he notes in his message,

“As a native New Yorker, I was very skeptical at first, but I have to admit, that the program is working. We’ve peacefully removed 5,000 insurgent fighters from the battle space...”

He goes on to quietly describe his wife’s busy schedule without him and how he can’t wait to come home to Long Island for the holidays.

I saved his email for you because I was struck by his sense of purpose, hope and his very noble desire to peacefully effect change. He represents us – America – to the world and I’m glad he does. And as immense as his work is, he most appreciates the opportunity to be home with loved ones for the holidays.

So that's my – or maybe I should say our message this holiday season. We are still very blessed to be with people we love this holiday season, and that alone is a wonderful gift. Even with all the heartache we've seen lately, there are still good and hope-filled things happening. God willing, we won't lose sight of that.

I wish you and your loved ones a happy holiday, whatever you celebrate, and may the new year be a better one, a safe one, with much peace and good health.