***65th Infantry Regiment - Congressional Gold Medal***

***Talking Script***

-Hi, my name is First Name, Last name. I am here representing XYZ organization [ or I am a private citizen, businessman, lawyer] and I appreciate you giving me the opportunity to speak here today.

-Bottom line is that we are urging Congress Member XYZ to HIGHLY CONSIDER Co-Sponsoring ***65th Infantry Congressional Gold Medal Bill H.R. 1726 (or S. 1174).***

-The 65th Infantry Regiment, out of Puerto Rico was the only Hispanic-Segregated Active-Duty unit EVER in the U.S. Armed Forces.

-The 65th Inf. was created by Congress in 1898 and comprised mainly Puerto Rican soldiers while their officer leadership where predominately Anglo-Saxson. They fought in WWI, WWII and most notably the Korean War.

If awarded, the CGM will be the highest recognition for Latino Veterans EVER.

***SHOW*** PROMOTIONAL VIDEO of the 65th INF CGM:

 **http://youtu.be/Bsf744wfTTQ**

OR***, SHOW*** TUSKEGEE AIRMEN CGM PRESENTATION CEREMONY:

[**http://video.paiunet.org/videos/view/618**](http://video.paiunet.org/videos/view/618)

***Up to date, in the 237 year history of the CGM, and out of after 159 Gold Medal recipients, only ONE other Latino has earned the CGM, Puerto Rican Baseball Hall of Famer, Roberto Clemente.***

Other minority veteran groups that have well-deservingly earned the CGM are:

- Tuskegee Airmen (first African-American military pilots)

- Nisei Japanese Soldiers (Japanese Soldiers in WWII)

- Navajo Code Talkers (Native American Marines who encrypted communications)

- Montford Point Marine (first African-American Marines)

This initiative is very special and near and dear to my heart because:

[RELATE YOUR PERSONAL EXAMPLE/STORY]

[My Father was a Borinquneer and was wounded in action…]

[I am a veteran and I know the sacrifices of combat under adversity….]

[My son is in the Army. He is Hispanic and I know how much the CGM will mean epitomize his relevance as Hispanic Veteran in the Armed Forces]

This whole initiative started last August of 2012 at a US Services Academy Reunion Event in Orlando, FL.

The 65th Infantry Regiment were going to be honored at the event’s minority veteran tribute luncheon, alongside the Tuskegee Airmen and the Montford Point Marines.

One of the Borinqueneers at the event observed the CGM bronze replica on one of the Montford Point Marines (which at the time were recently awarded the CGM in June of 2012) and asked, “How can the 65th Infantry earn one of those?”

The rest was history….

- H.R. 1726 was introduced on April 25th, 2013 by Rep. Bill Posey (R-Central Eastern Florida) and Rep. Pedro Pierluisi (D-Puerto Rico)

-H.R. 1726 currently has **XX** Co-Sponsors and needs at least 290.

-S .1174 was introduced on June 18th, 2013 by Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and 7 x originating Co-Sponsors:

-S.1174 currently has at least **XX** Co-Sponsors and needs at least 67.

(Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL), Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL), Sen. Bob Brady (D-PA), Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Sen. Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Sen. Charles Schumer (D-NY)

In order to obtain the CGM, 2/3’s Co-Sponsors (different from regular votes) are needed both in the House of Rep and in the Senate.

Once the minimum Co-Sponsors are reached in each chamber, the CGM goes for consideration to each of its respective governing committees:

House of Rep. – Committee of Banking and Financial Services

Senate – Committee of Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

The following are some of the key highlights of the 65th Infantry during the Korean War:

* **General (Retired) Richard Cavazos**
	+ Only Hispanic Army Four-Star General ***(Mexican-American)***
	+ Fought with the 65th Infantry in Korea
	+ With the 65th Inf., earned Distinguished Service Cross (Army’s highest decoration)
* **During Korean War, one of the most ethnically diverse combat units in US history**
	+ 65th Infantry did not just consist of Puerto Rican Veterans
	+ 65th Infantry *comprised of Mexican-Americans, African-Americans, Filipinos, Virgin Islanders, and several other ethnicities*
* **Last Recorded Regimental-Sized Bayonet Assault in Military executed in the Korean War**
* **Defended the rear-guard of the 1st Marine Division in one of the epic military withdrawals in history and were the last ones to board the retreating ships**
* **One of the best equipped units entering the Korean War**

Three other bills have been introduced in Congress in the past for the 65th Infantry:

**• 1997 – 65th Infantry Recognition**

– H.R. 192, 105th Congress

• **1997 – 65th Infantry Commemorative Coin**

– H.R. 2978, 105th Congress

• **2007 – 65th Infantry Official Recognition**

– H.R. 443, 110th Congress (Passed)

There are 10 memorials and monuments around the nation honoring the 65th Infantry Regiment (New York, Colorado, Puerto Rico, Florida, Virginia)

There are over 25 Proclamation and Resolutions throughout the nation at the state, county and city level urging Congress to award the CGM to the 65th Infantry Regiment.

You can check out all of the on-line news articles on our initiative at our website:

**www.65thCGM.org/in-the-news**

The following organizations have officially endorsed the 65th Infantry CGM legislation

***- Military Order of the Purple Heart***

***- Vietnam Veterans of America***

***- American GI Forum***

***- National Puerto Rican Coalition***

***- Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association***

***- League of United Latino American Citizens (LULAC)***

***Why the CGM for the 65th Infantry?***

**1. The 65th Infantry Veterans are in the later stages of their life and are passing off to glory**. We are racing against time to have as many Borinqueneers WITNESS their own CGM presentation ceremony.

***2. The 65th Infantry CGM will be the highest recognition EVER for a Latino Veterans group. Moreover, it will be the second CGM awarded to a Latino recipient in its 237 years of its existence out of 158 CGM recipients.*** Therefore, the CGM will truly serve to highlight the valuable, positive contributions from Hispanics to the nation and thus offsetting/downplaying a lot of the negative stereotypes, publicity being portrayed in today’s media outlets.

***3. There were many great US military units during the Korean War and among them was the 65th Infantry Regiment. However, what makes the 65th Infantry Regiment unique and stand out among their contemporaries is that the 65th Infantry attain many great military achievement despite enduring many adverse conditions in which their contemporaries did not endured.***

It is also this same rationale that very fittingly merited the CGM for the other minority veteran groups such as the: 1) Tuskegee Airmen 2) Nisei (Japanese) Soldiers 3) Navajo Code Talkers 4) Montford Point Marines 5) Womens Air Service Pilots (WASP).

***4) The 65th Inf. CGM will serve as a springboard to bring to the national forefront a myriad of issues relating to Hispanic Veterans most notably:***

1. **Disparate and dismal VA facilities and services in PR, Virgin Islands, St. Thomas and the rest of the territories.**
2. **Medal of Honor request for SGT Rafael Peralta (Marine who died in Iraq and whose Medal of Honor request was approved by the US Navy and denied by the Dept. of Defense)**

**C) Hispanic COMABAT Veterans who are on deportation orders**

1. **Many other relevant issues as they relate to Hispanic Veterans.**

**Thank you for your time and for hearing my discussion. I hope Congress member XYS takes full consideration in Co-Sponsoring this LANDMARK legislation for Latino Veterans. We look forward in hearing back from your office.**