

COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO

17<sup>th</sup> Legislative  
Assembly

1<sup>st</sup> Regular  
Session

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**H. Conc. R. 28**

APRIL 18, 2013

Introduced by Mr. *Ferrer-Ríos*

Referred to the Committee on Internal Affairs

**CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

To urge the United States Congress to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the veterans of the courageous 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, the only all-Hispanic unit in the history of the United States Army.

**STATEMENT OF MOTIVES**

As provided by an act of Congress on March 2, 1899, the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment was the only Hispanic-segregated unit in Army history that played a prominent role in American military history, participating in three wars in which the United States has been involved.

The order passed by Congress authorized the recruitment of male volunteers to create a battalion that would protect Puerto Rico. Initially, the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment was part of the National Guard. It was composed of four companies, each of which recruited 100 men, and was nicknamed the “Volunteers’ Regiment”.

The 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment started as a dual unit, part of both the Puerto Rico National Guard and the active duty Army. During World War II, it was assigned to the United States Army 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, but it remained in Puerto Rico until January 1943. Subsequently, the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment was transferred to Panamá and, later, to France in September 1944.

After its assignment to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division and its incorporation into the active duty Army, the Regiment became known, and is still known today in the Armed Forces, as the “Borinqueneers,” which replaced the nickname of “Volunteers.”

The unfavorable image that this Unit initially had before the eyes of the Army changed in 1950, when the Regiment prevented the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division of the United States Army from advancing during a training exercise. This event was recognized as an important achievement, given that a Regiment was able to resist an entire division. At that moment, the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment was assigned to and became the main regiment of the Army’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division.

On August 25, 1950, only seven months after the training exercise that distinguished these Puerto Ricans within the Armed Forces, the Regiment received orders to go to Korea. The men assigned to such Regiment were the first to arrive to this distant country. Their mission was to find the enemy on the battlefield. Taking advantage of their country’s climate during the winter, Koreans made several attempts against the Regiment, trying to catch them off guard. However, the Regiment fought resolutely and efficiently, resisting the attacks from the Korean army.

The 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment attained most of its achievements during the Korean War. During said war, the Regiment established a reputation for always being present and remaining where the battle was most intense. From the beginning of the war, the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment engaged in nine campaigns: UN Defense-1950, UN Offense-1950, CCF Intervention-1950, 1<sup>st</sup> UN Counterattack

Offensive-1951, UN and CCF Spring Offensive-1951, UN Summer-Fall Offensive-1951, 2<sup>nd</sup> Korean Winter 1951–52, Korean Summer-Fall-1952, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Korean Winter-1952-53. More than three thousand soldiers of the regiment were wounded and over 700 were killed in action. Its members have individually earned Distinguished Service Crosses, Silver Stars, Bronze Stars, and over 2,700 Purple Heart medals for their serve in the Army.

The 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, in Korea, was inactivated in 1956, and transferred to the 92<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade of the Puerto Rico National Guard, where it still serves.

Moreover, in addition to the aforementioned accolades, it would be an honor for the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment to join the list of other minority veterans who served in segregated units and who, in turn, have been awarded the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal. These are: the Navajo Code Talkers, the African-American Tuskegee Airmen, the Japanese-American Nisei, and the African-American Montford Point Marines.

For all of the foregoing, and for their great achievements, this Legislative Assembly, on behalf of the People of Puerto Rico, not only remembers and recognizes the historical and heroic actions of the members of the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, but also formally urges the United States Congress to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the veterans of the courageous 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment.

***BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF PUERTO RICO:***

Section 1.- The Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico hereby urges the United States Congress to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the veterans of the courageous 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, the only all-Hispanic unit in the history of the United States Army.

Section 2.- A certified copy of this Concurrent Resolution shall be translated into English and sent to the members of the United States Congress by the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House of Representatives of Puerto Rico.

Section 3.- This Concurrent Resolution shall take effect immediately after its approval.