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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The United States 65th Infantry Regiment, better known as the Borinqueneers, traces its lineage from the first U.S. Infantry Battalion of native Puerto Rico Volunteer Troops authorized by Congress in 1899; and

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WHEREAS, During World War I, after Puerto Rico patriotically requested that the Selective Service Draft law be extended to Puerto Rico, the 65th Infantry Regiment went to war with the strength of 1,969 men; the unit bravely defended the Panama Canal and fought overseas for liberty; and

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WHEREAS, After serving in both the North African and European theaters during World War II, the 65th Infantry Regiment stayed after Germany's surrender to serve in dangerous security, anti-sabotage, and other occupation missions around Kaiserslautern and Mannheim, Germany; the troops of the 65th were among the last units to come home from the war; and

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WHEREAS, In 1950, after arriving in Pusan, the men of the 65th Infantry Regiment were one of the first fighting infantrymen of the U.S. 3rd Infantry Division (The Rock of the Marne) to fearlessly meet the enemy on the battlefield of Korea; and

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1 WHEREAS, In 1950, the 65th Infantry Regiment bravely
2 protected the 1st Marine Division, the Army's 7th Infantry
3 Division, and their supply lines as they withdrew from a large
4 Chinese army near the Manchurian border that had recently
5 agreed to support North Korea during the campaign; and

6 WHEREAS, The 65th Infantry Regiment held their own against
7 overwhelming enemy forces in a rear-guard action during the
8 strategic evacuation of Hungnam, helping United Nations and
9 U.S. forces to successfully return to South Korea to fight
10 again another day; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1951, the 65th Infantry Regiment fought for
12 three days before the 449th and 262nd Battalions fixed bayonets
13 and boldly charged the Chinese troops in order to force an
14 enemy retreat and take the disputed hill through the last
15 bayonet charge in U.S. Army history; and

16 WHEREAS, The 65th Infantry Regiment saved the 3rd Division
17 Headquarters and its commanding general while camping nearby
18 when they spotted the enemy approaching and organized a
19 counterattack after an enemy infantry regiment infiltrated the
20 lines; and

21 WHEREAS, During the Korean War, Puerto Rico represented
22 some 61,000 soldiers who served the U.S. Army; Puerto Rico

1 sustained one casualty for every 660 of its inhabitants,
2 proportionately suffering more casualties than a majority of
3 states; and

4 WHEREAS, 6,000 Puerto Rican soldiers served in the 65th
5 Infantry Regiment, distinguishing themselves over a three-year
6 period and receiving awards for bravery; the soldiers of the
7 65th were also credited with the last regimental bayonet
8 assault in U.S. Army history; and

9 WHEREAS, The Borinqueneers selflessly served and
10 sacrificed, repeatedly giving credence to General Douglas
11 MacArthur's statement that "the gallant 65th Infantry... by
12 valor, determination, and a resolute will to victory give daily
13 testament their invincible loyalty to the United States",
14 ensuring our prosperity as they faced segregation,
15 discrimination, and unequal American citizenship; and

16 WHEREAS, The Borinqueneers helped pave the way for full
17 integration of the United States Armed Forces and ensuring
18 equal U.S. citizenship and civil rights for all that reside in
19 the United States under our flag; and

20 WHEREAS, Major achievements are attributed to many of those
21 who returned to civilian life and earned leadership positions
22 and respect as businessmen, corporate executives, religious

1 leaders, lawyers, doctors, educators, bankers, and political
2 leaders; and

3 WHEREAS, The U.S. 65th Infantry Regiment's colors were
4 passed to the Puerto Rico National Guard in 1959; this marks
5 the only instance in U.S. Army history that Active Unit Colors
6 were turned over to a National Guard Unit, rather than retired;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, The U.S. 65th Infantry Regiment has repeatedly
9 displayed its bravery in combat, earning Battle Campaign Awards
10 for Naples-Foggian, Rome-Arne, Central Europe, and Rhineland
11 Campaigns during World War II, and nine Korean Battle Campaign
12 Awards, the Presidential and Meritorious Unit Commendations,
13 two Korean Presidential Unit Citations, the Greek Gold Medal,
14 the Navy Unit Commendation, and others during the Korean War;
15 its individual members have received 10 Distinguished Service
16 Crosses, 258 Silver Stars, 628 Bronze Stars, and over 2,700
17 Purple Hearts, among many other individual awards; and

18 WHEREAS, These brave Borinqueneers have earned their place
19 alongside the great list of American heroes and are deserving
20 of being honored, commended, and never forgotten by this august
21 body and the United States of America for their great feats of
22 courage; therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL
2 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we recognize the United
3 States 65th Infantry Regiment (the Borinqueneers) for their
4 painful sacrifices, selfless service, gallantry in battle,
5 great contributions, and steadfast loyalty to our nation; and
6 be it further

7 RESOLVED, That we urge Congress and the President to award
8 the Congressional Gold Medal to the Borinqueneers of the U.S.
9 65th Infantry Regiment; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That we encourage the Governor of the State of
11 Illinois to issue a proclamation articulating his support in
12 granting the Congressional Gold Medal to the U.S. 65th Infantry
13 Regiment and to utilize his resources in realizing the
14 aforementioned request; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That we commend the efforts of the original US
16 65th Infantry Regiment Association for their work as the
17 principle keepers of the Borinqueneers' brave flame of devotion
18 to Duty, Honor, and Country; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be sent
20 to the President of the United States, the President of the
21 United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of
22 Representatives, the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico, the

1 members of the Illinois Congressional Delegation, the Speaker
2 and Minority Leader of the Illinois House of Representatives,
3 the President of the US 65th Veterans' Association, the
4 Chairman of the Borinqueneer CGM Alliance, and the Puerto Rican
5 Agenda Committee.