

CS/HM 1087

2013

1 House Memorial

2 A memorial to the President and the Congress of the
3 United States, urging Congress and the President to
4 award the Congressional Gold Medal to the United
5 States 65th Infantry Regiment, the Borinqueneers.

6
7 WHEREAS, the Borinqueneers trace their lineage to the
8 "Puerto Rico Regiment of Volunteer Infantry," authorized by
9 Congress on March 2, 1899, as the first body of native troops in
10 Puerto Rico, the only Hispanic-segregated unit in the United
11 States Armed Forces that played a prominent role in American
12 military history, and

13 WHEREAS, during World War I, the Borinqueneers rallied a
14 force of over 1,500 to defend the Panama Canal and upon their
15 return to Puerto Rico were renamed "The 65th Infantry Regiment,"
16 and

17 WHEREAS, during World War II, the Borinqueneers served in
18 North Africa and Europe, winning Naples-Foggia, Rome-Arno,
19 Central Europe, and Rhineland battle campaign awards, and were
20 assigned security, anti-sabotage, and other occupation missions
21 around Kaiserslautern and Mannheim, Germany, after the war, and

22 WHEREAS, during the Korean War, the Borinqueneers were the
23 only all-Hispanic unit; joined the United States 3rd Infantry
24 Division to be among the first infantry to engage in battle with
25 North Korean troops; served with distinction to earn four
26 Distinguished Service Crosses, 124 Silver Stars, nine Korean
27 battle campaign awards, the Presidential Unit Citation, the
28 Meritorious Unit Commendation, the Navy Unit Commendation, two

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29 Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citations, and the Greek
30 Gold Medal for Bravery; and is credited with launching the last
31 recorded battalion-sized bayonet assault in United States Army
32 history, and

33 WHEREAS, legendary United States Army General Douglas
34 MacArthur lauded the Borinqueneers, crediting them with a
35 resolute will to victory and loyalty to the United States,
36 saying "They are writing a brilliant record of heroism in battle
37 and I am indeed proud to have them under my command. I wish that
38 we could count on many more like them," and

39 WHEREAS, in 1959, the Borinqueneers passed their colors to
40 the National Guard of the United States Territory of Puerto
41 Rico, withdrawing from the Regular Army, the only time in United
42 States Army history that active unit colors were not retired
43 but, instead, turned over to a National Guard unit, and

44 WHEREAS, today, the legacy of the Borinqueneers lives on in
45 the National Guard in Puerto Rico, which continues to defend the
46 United States in the ongoing War on Terrorism, and

47 WHEREAS, the Borinqueneers served and sacrificed, shedding
48 blood for our democracy and helping to ensure our prosperity as
49 they faced segregation and discrimination, protecting our nation
50 and fighting for the good of all, and

51 WHEREAS, these warriors, the Borinqueneers, deserve a place
52 with all American heroes and should be honored, commended, and
53 never forgotten for their feats, and

54 WHEREAS, the Congressional Gold Medal is the highest
55 civilian award given by the United States Congress, awarded as

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56 | an expression of public gratitude on behalf of the nation for
57 | distinguished contributions, NOW, THEREFORE,

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59 | Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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61 | That, in recognition of the bravery and sacrifice of the
62 | United States 65th Infantry Regiment, the Borinqueneers, the
63 | President and the Congress of the United States are urged to
64 | award the Congressional Gold Medal to these true heroes and
65 | defenders of our great nation.

66

67 | BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
68 | dispatched to the President of the United States, to the
69 | President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the
70 | United States House of Representatives, to each member of the
71 | Florida delegation to the United States Congress, to the Puerto
72 | Rico Resident Commissioner, to the President of the United
73 | States 65th Infantry Regiment Association, to the chair of the
74 | Hispanic Achievers Grant Council, to the chair of the
75 | Borinqueneers Congressional Gold Medal Alliance, and to the
National Association for Uniformed Services.