

Legislation Text

File #: 150040, **Version:** 0

Recognizing 2015 as the “Year of the Borinqueneers - United States Army 65th Infantry Regiment” in Philadelphia to honor and celebrate the remarkable military accomplishments of this Puerto Rican Regiment despite facing segregation and prejudice.

WHEREAS, On March 2, 1898, the United States Congress authorized the first body of Puerto Rican troops, which was organized on June 30, 1901, as the “Puerto Rico Provisional Regiment of Infantry”; and

WHEREAS, Members of the Unit decided to call themselves the “Borinqueneers,” a term derived from the Taino word for Puerto Rico meaning “Land of the Brave Lord;”

WHEREAS, The Borinqueneers 65th Infantry Regiment was the largest, longest-standing and only active-duty segregated Latino military unit in United States history; and

WHEREAS, The Borinqueneers have lived their motto which is: “Honor Et Fidelitas” meaning in Latin “Honor and Fidelity;” and

WHEREAS, Over 100,000 Borinqueneers have distinguished themselves as true American war heroes during their long, rich military history; and

WHEREAS, The Borinqueneers played prominent roles in World War I, World War II and particularly the Korean War; and

WHEREAS, General Douglas MacArthur wrote of the Borinqueneers that, “The Puerto Ricans forming the ranks of the gallant 65th Infantry give daily proof on the battlefields of Korea of their courage, determination and resolute will to victory, their invincible loyalty to the United States and their fervent devotion to those immutable principles of human relations which the Americans of the Continent and Puerto Rico have in common. They are writing a brilliant record of heroism in battle and I am indeed proud to have them under my command. I wish that we count on many more like them;” and

WHEREAS, On April 10, 1956, the Borinqueneers 65th Infantry Regiment was de-activated and it was transferred on February 6, 1959, to the Puerto Rico Army National Guard, where 1st Battalion, 65th Infantry Regiment still serves; and

WHEREAS, On June 10, 2014, President of the United States Barrack Obama signed the 65th Infantry Regiment “Borinqueneers” Congressional Gold Medal legislation in recognition of the Borinqueneers for their heroism, military history, service, and achievements in the same way as the Tuskegee Airmen and Navajo Code Talkers have been recognized; and

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia, with its important community of Puerto Ricans, is especially proud to join in the justly-deserved recognition of the Borinqueneers 65th Infantry Regiment; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby recognizes 2015 as the “Year of the Borinqueneers - United States Army 65th Infantry Regiment” in Philadelphia to honor and celebrate the remarkable military accomplishments of this Puerto Rican Regiment despite facing segregation and prejudice.