



Alejandro J. García Padilla
Governor
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

July 24, 2013

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Schumer:

I thank you for being an original cosponsor of S. 1174. Awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment (the "Regiment") is an acknowledgement to the sacrifice made by the soldiers who have been part of this Regiment. These men, also known as the Borinqueneers, have proudly served the United States in countless military conflicts.

The Regiment participated in World War I and World War II. During World War II, they were sent to fight Nazis in Europe; later, they showed great courage under fire in the Korean War.

The Borinqueneers are among the first infantrymen to confront the Chinese and the North Koreans in battlefield. They performed countless acts of courage and selfless heroism, never surrendering despite heavy casualties. Records show that General Douglas MacArthur himself recognized their grit. By the end of the conflict, the Borinqueneers had been awarded 2,771 Purple Stars, 606 Bronze Stars, 256 Silver Stars, and 10 Distinguished Service Crosses.

While the Regiment, befitting the uniform, carried out its duties with dignity, a change in command led to racial prejudice at the hands of a new commanding officer. This lowered morale and led to disorder amongst the Regiment. The resulting prosecution is a nadir in the relationship between Puerto Ricans and the U.S. Armed Forces. Although many of these veterans were granted pardons, their valor warrants the Congressional Gold Medal.

This year marks six decades since the signing of the Armistice that ended major hostilities in the Korean Peninsula. Since then, many heroes from that generation have bid us farewell, but their era has not yet come to a close. Congress has the opportunity to recognize the contributions of these heroes. I applaud you for your support of this bill. Let's keep working together to ensure passage of S. 1174.

Very truly yours,

The Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico,


Alejandro J. García Padilla