

SENATE MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION No. 78

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 19, 2022

The Senate Military and Veterans Affairs Committee reports favorably Senate Joint Resolution No. 78.

This joint resolution designates April 13th as Borinqueneer's Day. Borinqueneer refers to members of the 65th Infantry Regiment, a unit comprised largely of Puerto Rican soldiers. Borinequeneer is derived from the indigenous, precolonial name for the island of Puerto Rico.

The 65th Infantry Regiment saw action in World War I, World War II, and the Korean War. Its members served with distinction in these conflict. Borinqueneers were awarded 90 Purple Hearts in World War II and over 2,000 during the Korean War. Borinqueneers received many accolades for their service in Korea, including the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star, and the Bronze Star. Additionally, the regiment was awarded the Presidential Unit Commendation, Meritorious Unit Commendation, and two Korean Presidential Unit Citations.

Despite the Borinqueneers' distinguished wartime service, members were subject to years of unfair treatment and discrimination, even while fighting for the United States. In April of 2016, the regiment was awarded a Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of its achievements. As part of the 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, Congress designated April 13 as the day to honor the Borinqueneers' service and "the sacrifices made and adversities overcome by Puerto Rican and Hispanic members of the armed forces."