



Congressman Pedro R. Pierluisi  
Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony  
To Honor the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, the *Borinqueneers*  
Emancipation Hall  
United States Capitol  
*April 13, 2016*

The U.S. territory of Puerto Rico faces enormous challenges. It has been difficult for my constituents and me to see the island we love suffer. And it is easy to lose spirit as the good name of your home is tarnished, too often associated with the negative rather than the positive.

That is why, even though the Korean War ended 60 years ago, today's ceremony could not be more timely. The American soldiers from Puerto Rico who formed the core of the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment remind the public of the extraordinary contributions that Puerto Rico has made to this country since 1898, in times of both war and peace. The Borinqueneers remind me and the 3.5 million U.S. citizens I represent why we are so proud to be Puerto Rican—at a time when our sense of pride has been shaken but never—ever—shattered. We should draw strength and inspiration from their legacy, and emulate their example. After all, this band of brothers overcame adversity of the most extreme sort, fighting the enemy on the frontlines of the battlefield, while also fighting discrimination back in the barracks. These warriors may have spoken English with an accent, but their service and sacrifice were universally understood.

The men of the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, many of whom are here today but many more of whom did not live to enjoy this glorious moment, represent the human spirit at its best—brave, tough, devoted to their duty and to each other. Puerto Rico has always had this nation’s back in times of crisis. It takes a special kind of patriotism to fight for a country that you love, but one that does not treat you equally.

To the Borinqueneers, those who are living and those who have left us, I want to simply say “Thank you.” *Gracias por su dedicación y sacrificio, por poner el nombre de Puerto Rico en alto, y por el servicio digno a los Estados Unidos de América.*