

in the past and present in our nation's armed forces, and I look forward to the resolution's adoption.

Sincerely,

ANIBAL ACEVEDO VILÁ,
Governor, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Mr. Speaker, it has been a privilege to learn about the proud service of the 65th Infantry Borinqueneers, the only Hispanic-segregated unit in the United States Military history. The first native Puerto Rican troops were approved by Congress in 1899, designated as the Puerto Rican Regiment U.S. Volunteers.

The regiment was ordered to war strength in 1917 and served in defense of the Panama Canal during World War I. On June 4, 1920, the regiment was officially re-designated as the 65th Infantry, U.S. Army.

After serving ably in France and Germany during World War II, the 65th was ordered to Korea in 1950. It was during the Korean War where the 65th Infantry invoked the name Borinqueneers, and it is also where they demonstrated their military prowess.

The name Borinqueneers comes from the word Borinquen, which is the original native Taino Indians of the island we now call Puerto Rico. Many members were direct descendants of these native people.

The Borinqueneers fought on the front lines in Korea, participating in nine major campaigns throughout the war. They were the protection force for marines withdrawing from far inland positions. They were the leading unit in the United Nations offensive of April 1951. In every campaign they performed as one of the most effective infantry regiments in the Army.

Earning the respect and admiration of fellow soldiers and military leaders, General Douglas MacArthur himself remarked, "They showed magnificent ability and courage in field operations," and "they are a credit to Puerto Rico, and I am proud to have them in my command."

Mr. Speaker, it is of the utmost importance that we recognize the valiant service of the Borinqueneers and that we recognize the sacrifices made by the people of Puerto Rico during the Korean War: 61,000 Puerto Ricans served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, the overwhelming majority in the 65th Infantry Regiment.

By the end of the war, 743 Puerto Ricans were killed, and over 2,300 wounded. One of every 42 casualties suffered by U.S. forces in Korea was Puerto Rican. Puerto Rico endured one casualty for every 660 of its inhabitants, a disproportionately heavy burden for the small island. This statistic highlights the enormous sacrifice by Puerto Rico, and it gives testament to the honor and distinction of their service.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to note some current efforts to promote and preserve the history of the 65th Infantry Borinqueneers. In my district,

the Korean War Memorial of Central Massachusetts Committee, along with Colonel Gilbert Villahermosa, Inspector General of the Massachusetts Army National Guard, and the Puerto Rican community of central Massachusetts are working together to commemorate the 65th Infantry.

The efforts have included promotion of the documentary film "The Borinqueneers," construction of a memorial flagpole, and Colonel Villahermosa himself has released a book detailing the critical role which the 65th Infantry played in Korea.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to have introduced this bill with the Representative from Puerto Rico (Mr. FORTUÑO), and I would also like to thank Chairman SKELTON and all members of the Armed Services Committee who supported its consideration on the suspension calendar.

Again, I want to thank my two colleagues, the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY), for their words here today.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to pass House Resolution 443.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. Before yielding back, I would like to encourage all of our colleagues, both sides of the aisle, and I am sure we will have a unanimous vote on H.Res 443. I thank the gentlewoman from New Hampshire for allowing me to control the time on this side.

Mr. FORTUÑO. Mr. Speaker, during this month, our country proudly celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month. In the midst of this celebration, it is with great honor and pride that I stand in support of H. Res. 443 which seeks to recognize the service of the 65th infantry regiment during the Korean War known as the Borinqueneers Regiment. I also want to thank Congressman MCGOVERN for his leadership in honoring these brave soldiers. At a time when there is a national dialogue on the contributions of Hispanic Americans, there is no better way to recognize their achievements, than by voting for H. Res. 443.

We know that since the Civil War, where over 10,000 Hispanic Americans wore uniforms for both sides, the number of soldiers of Hispanic heritage that have served in each conflict has been significant. Their participation in every military conflict is a source of many heroic actions.

In World War I, 200,000 Hispanics were mobilized and to this day we hear stories of their valor, and devotion to spread democracy and freedom around the World.

Roughly half a million Hispanics served during World War II. They fought bravely in all of the major conflicts extending throughout Europe, the Pacific and Africa.

But it is during the Korean War that over 148,000 Hispanics served, of which 20,000 were from my district in Puerto Rico. 4,000 of them comprised the 65th Infantry Regiment, the largest U.S. infantry regiment for that war. This regiment fought in every major campaign of the Korean War and received numerous praises including a Presidential Unit Citation, Meritorious Unit Commendations and two Republic of Korea Unit Citations for their perform-

ance. I would like to quote General Douglas MacArthur, who said in Tokyo on February 12, 1951: "The Puerto Ricans forming the ranks of the gallant 65th Infantry on the battlefields of Korea . . . are writing a brilliant record of achievement in battle and I am proud indeed to have them in this command. I wish that we might have many more like them."

It is due to this ever-growing identity in the United States, that Hispanic Americans continue to wear, with honor, the uniforms of our Armed Forces. This legislation honors the 65th Infantry Borinqueneers and the legacy they left behind; a legacy of valor, courage and self-sacrifice in the face of adversity. I am proud to be an American of Hispanic descent and equally proud to represent the members of the 65th Infantry Regiment; it is for them that I stand here today in support of this legislation and urge all my colleagues to unanimously vote in favor of H. Res. 443.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 443, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1600

EXPRESSING APPRECIATION AND THANKS FOR THE SERVICE OF MEMBERS OF THE 303RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HEAVY) UPON THE OCCASION OF THE FINAL REUNION OF THE 303RD BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 604) expressing the Nation's sincerest appreciation and thanks for the service of the members of the 303rd Bombardment Group (Heavy) upon the occasion of the final reunion of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 604

Whereas the 303rd Bombardment Group (Heavy) was activated on February 3, 1942, at Pendleton Field, Oregon, and trained at Gowen Field, Idaho, from February 11, 1942, until June 17, 1942;

Whereas the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) was stationed in Molesworth, England, and comprised of the 358th Bombardment Squadron, the 359th Bombardment Squadron, the 360th Bombardment Squadron, and the 427th Bombardment Squadron;

Whereas the 303rd Bombardment Group (H), also known as "Hell's Angels", arrived at Molesworth, England on September 12, 1942, and bravely fought in World War II;

Whereas the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) support personnel sailed on the Queen Mary

on September 5, 1942, and arrived at Greenock, Scotland, on September 11, 1942, the flight crews flew to Kellogg Field, Michigan, then to Dow Field, Maine, to start their flights to England across the Atlantic Ocean;

Whereas the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) flew its first combat mission on November 17, 1942, and its last mission on April 25, 1945;

Whereas the 303rd Bombardment Group's B-17 "Hell's Angels" was the first to successfully complete 25 combat missions on May 13, 1943;

Whereas the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) flew 364 combat missions against enemy targets, the most of any B-17 Bomb Group in the 8th Air Force during World War II;

Whereas two 303rd Bombardment Group (H) airmen were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, four were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, 33 were awarded the Silver Star, and approximately 1,200 Purple Hearts were awarded for those killed or wounded in action;

Whereas the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) adopted the motto "Might in Flight" in October 1942 and lived up to it on each of their 364 combat missions;

Whereas 165 aircraft in the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) were listed as missing in action (MIA);

Whereas the original 303rd Bombardment Group (H) was inactivated on July 25, 1945, at Casablanca;

Whereas the veterans of the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) formed the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association in 1975 to provide opportunities for 303rd veterans, families, and friends to meet;

Whereas the veterans of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association memorialize and perpetuate the memory of 303rd Bombardment Group (H) comrades lost during World War II, and who have since passed away;

Whereas due to age and the declining health of the 303rd Bombardment Group (H) veterans, the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association Board of Directors has made the difficult decision to dissolve the Association at the end of 2007; and

Whereas the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association's final reunion will be held in Washington, D.C., on September 19, 2007 through September 23, 2007; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) The dedicated men and women who served in the 8th Air Force, 303rd Bombardment Group (H), "Hell's Angels", including the nearly 5,000 listed as missing in action, during World War II are heroes and champions of American freedom; and

(2) The House of Representatives, on behalf of a grateful nation, recognizes the final reunion of the 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association and commends the honorable members of the Association, who never once turned away from their assigned target, for their selfless service to our country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN). Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Hampshire.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 604, expressing the Nation's sincerest appreciation and thanks for the service of the members of the 303rd Bombardment Group (Heavy) upon the occasion of their final reunion. I thank my colleague from

Michigan (Mr. McCOTTER) for bringing this measure before the House.

Our history is rich with heroes who have risen above and beyond the call of duty in service to our great Nation. The American flag billows proudly above this Capitol building, and even more boldly behind your seat, Mr. Speaker, due to the extraordinary heroism of our servicemen in times of war.

The 303rd Bombardment Group is certainly part of this legacy. Two 303rd Bombardment Group airmen, Technical Sergeant Forrest Vosler and First Lieutenant Jack Mathis, were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, four were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, 33 were awarded the Silver Star, approximately 1,200 Purple Hearts were awarded for those killed or wounded in action, and over 5,000 were listed as missing in action during World War II. While these numbers make me proud to be an American, statistics alone cannot begin to comprehend the tremendous service they have done for all of us.

The members of the 303rd Bomb Group Association have provided opportunities for 303rd veterans, families and friends to meet, and have perpetuated the memory of the 303rd Bombardment Group comrades lost during World War II, since the organization was founded in 1975.

And while the 303rd Bomb Group Association is meeting this week for the final time, the United States House of Representatives and our great Nation can express its sincerest thanks for their service by carrying forth the mission statement of the 303rd Bomb Group Association and making timeless the memory of their successes and sacrifices by memorializing their history in law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 604.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, today I speak in support of House Resolution 604, which expresses the Nation's appreciation and thanks for the servicemembers of the 303rd Bombardment Group (Heavy) upon the occasion of the final reunion of the 303rd Bomb Group Association.

Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate to learn that the 303rd Bomb Group Association will dissolve following their final reunion this week in Arlington, Virginia. The declining number of these courageous veterans makes it difficult for the association to continue their annual reunions.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to pay tribute to the valiant men of the 303rd Bombardment Group known as "Hell's Angels."

Activated in February 1942 at Pendleton, Oregon, the 303rd was an Eighth Air Force Bomber Group that flew the mighty B-17 Flying Fortress out of Molesworth, England. Living up to their adopted motto, "Might in Flight," the air crews flew a record 364 combat missions against enemy tar-

gets, the most of any B-17 Bomb Group in the Eighth Air Force during World War II.

For its actions in the skies over Europe, the group was awarded a Distinguished Unit Citation in January 1944, two of the heroic crew men of the 303rd were awarded with Congressional Medal of Honor, and four earned the Distinguished Service Cross.

For all of their accomplishments, the members of the Bomb Group paid a heavy price in casualties, aircraft losses, and capture by the enemy. Their determination to complete the mission regardless of the opposition or the odds carried them through their losses and on to victory in the air.

Mr. Speaker, given the history of outstanding service by the 303rd Bombardment Group during World War II, as well as the last reunion of the veterans of the 303rd taking place this week, it is fitting that we take the time today to recognize and honor their service. I therefore strongly urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I recognize Mr. McCOTTER of Michigan for such time as he might consume.

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the sponsor of the resolution and the chairman of the committee, the ranking member, and all of my colleagues who are joining me in support of honoring the heroic members of the 303rd Bombardment Group.

It has rightly been said that they were the greatest generation; and yet, it is important, through the adoption of resolutions and other instances, where we, as a people, recognize their sacrifice for the very liberty upon which our free Republic is founded, always remember that their service to our Nation did not end with World War II, for they continued in their transition to civilian life where they also helped form the foundation of our Nation. But it is also critical that, too, at this juncture, where again another generation of Americans finds themselves tasked with defending freedom in its maximum hour of danger, that we never forget the example that these citizens, soldiers and airmen set for the rest of us, not just as a matter of history, but as a matter for our progeny that they may ever breathe free.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Mr. McCOTTER for bringing forth this resolution so that this body might honor the 303rd.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from New Hampshire

(Ms. SHEA-PORTER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 604, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 326 and H. Res. 604.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Hampshire?

There was no objection.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AS AN INDEPENDENT MILITARY SERVICE

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 207) recognizing the 60th anniversary of the United States Air Force as an independent military service.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 207

Whereas President Harry S. Truman signed the National Security Act of 1947 on July 26, 1947, to realign and reorganize the Armed Forces and to create a separate Department of the Air Force from the existing military services;

Whereas the National Security Act of 1947 was enacted on September 18, 1947;

Whereas the Aeronautical Division of the United States Army Signal Corps, consisting of one officer and two enlisted men, began operation under the command of Captain Charles DeForest Chandler on August 1, 1907, with the responsibility for "all matters pertaining to military ballooning, air machines, and all kindred subjects";

Whereas in 1908, the Department of War contracted with the Wright brothers to build one heavier-than-air flying machine for the United States Army, and accepted the Wright Military Flyer, the world's first military airplane, in 1909;

Whereas United States pilots, flying with both allied air forces and with the Army Air Service, performed admirably in the course of World War I, participating in pursuit, observation, and day and night bombing missions;

Whereas pioneering aviators of the United States, including Mason M. Patrick, William "Billy" Mitchell, Benjamin D. Foulois, Frank M. Andrews, Henry "Hap" Arnold, James "Jimmy" H. Doolittle, and Edward "Eddie" Rickenbacker, were among the first to recognize the military potential of air power and courageously forged the foundations for the creation of an independent arm for air forces in the United States in the decades following World War I;

Whereas on June 20, 1941, the Department of War created the Army Air Forces (AAF) as its aviation element and shortly thereafter the Department of War made the AAF co-equal to the Army Ground Forces;

Whereas General Henry H. "Hap" Arnold drew upon the industrial prowess and human resources of the United States to transform the Army Air Corps from a force of 22,400 men and 2,402 aircraft in 1939 to a peak wartime strength of 2.4 million personnel and 79,908 aircraft;

Whereas the standard for courage, flexibility, and intrepidity in combat was established for all Airmen during the first aerial raid in the Pacific Theater on April 18, 1942, when Lieutenant Colonel James "Jimmy" H. Doolittle led 16 North American B-25 Mitchell bombers in a joint operation from the deck of the naval carrier USS Hornet to strike the Japanese mainland in response to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor;

Whereas President Harry S. Truman supported organizing air power as an equal arm of the military forces of the United States, writing on December 19, 1945, that air power had developed so that the responsibilities and contributions to military strategic planning of air power equaled those of land and sea power;

Whereas on September 18, 1947, W. Stuart Symington became the first Secretary of the newly formed and independent United States Air Force (USAF), and on September 26, 1947, General Carl A. Spaatz became the first Chief of Staff of the USAF;

Whereas the Air National Guard was also created by the National Security Act of 1947 and has played a vital role in guarding the United States and defending freedom in nearly every major conflict and contingency since its inception;

Whereas on October 14, 1947, the USAF demonstrated its historic and ongoing commitment to technological innovation when Captain Charles "Chuck" Yeager piloted the X-1 developmental rocket plane to a speed of Mach 1.07, becoming the first flyer to break the sound barrier in a powered aircraft in level flight;

Whereas the USAF Reserve, created April 14, 1948, is comprised of Citizen Airmen who steadfastly sacrifice personal fortune and family comfort in order to serve as unrivaled wingmen of the active duty USAF in every deployment, mission, and battlefield around the globe;

Whereas the USAF operated the Berlin Airlift in 1948 and 1949 to provide humanitarian relief to post-war Germany and has established a tradition of humanitarian assistance in responding to natural disasters and needs across the world;

Whereas the USAF announced a policy of racial integration in the ranks of the USAF on April 26, 1948, 3 months prior to a Presidential mandate to integrate all military services;

Whereas in the early years of the Cold War, the USAF's arsenal of bombers, such as the long-range Convair B-58 Hustler and B-36 Peacemaker, and the Boeing B-47 Stratojet and B-52 Stratofortress, under the command of General Curtis LeMay served as the United States' preeminent deterrent against Soviet Union forces and were later augmented by the development and deployment of medium range and intercontinental ballistic missiles, such as the Titan and Minuteman developed by General Bernard A. Schriever;

Whereas the USAF, employing the first large-scale combat use of jet aircraft, helped to establish air superiority over the Korean peninsula, protected ground forces of the United Nations with close air support, and interdicted enemy reinforcements and supplies during the conflict in Korea;

Whereas after the development of launch vehicles and orbital satellites, the mission of the USAF expanded into space and today provides exceptional real-time global communications, environmental monitoring,

navigation, precision timing, missile warning, nuclear deterrence, and space surveillance;

Whereas USAF Airmen have contributed to the manned space program of the United States since the program's inception and throughout the program's development at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration by dedicating themselves wholly to space exploration despite the risks of exploration;

Whereas the USAF engaged in a limited campaign of air power to assist the South Vietnamese government in countering the communist Viet Cong guerillas during the Vietnam War and fought to disrupt supply lines, halt enemy ground offensives, and protect United States and Allied forces;

Whereas Airmen were imprisoned and tortured during the Vietnam War and, in the valiant tradition of Airmen held captive in previous conflicts, continued serving the United States with honor and dignity under the most inhumane circumstances;

Whereas, in recent decades, the USAF and coalition partners of the United States have supported successful actions in Panama, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan, and many other locations around the globe;

Whereas Pacific Air Forces, along with Asia-Pacific partners of the United States, ensure peace and advance freedom from the west coast of the United States to the east coast of Africa and from the Arctic to the Antarctic, covering more than 100 million square miles and the homes of 2 billion people in 44 countries;

Whereas the United States Air Forces in Europe, along with European partners of the United States, have shaped the history of Europe from World War II, the Cold War, Operation Deliberate Force, and Operation Allied Force to today's operations, and secured stability and ensured freedom's future in Europe, Africa, and Southwest Asia;

Whereas, for 17 consecutive years beginning with 1990, Airmen have been engaged in full-time combat operations ranging from Desert Shield to Iraqi Freedom, and have shown themselves to be an expeditionary air and space force of outstanding capability ready to fight and win wars of the United States when and where Airmen are called upon to do so;

Whereas the USAF is steadfast in its commitment to field a world-class, expeditionary air force by recruiting, training, and educating its Total Force of active duty, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, and civilian personnel;

Whereas the USAF is a trustworthy steward of resources, developing and applying technology, managing professional acquisition programs, and maintaining exacting test, evaluation, and sustainment criteria for all USAF weapon systems throughout such weapon systems' life cycles;

Whereas, when terrorists attacked the United States on September 11, 2001, USAF fighter and air refueling aircraft took to the skies to fly combat air patrols over major United States cities and protect families, friends, and neighbors of people of the United States from further attack;

Whereas, on December 7, 2005, the USAF modified its mission statement to include flying and fighting in cyberspace and prioritized the development, maintenance, and sustainment of war fighting capabilities to deliver unrestricted access to cyberspace and defend the United States and its global interests;

Whereas Airmen around the world are committed to fighting and winning the Global War on Terror and have flown more than 430,000 sorties to precisely target and engage insurgents who attempt to violently disrupt rebuilding in Iraq and Afghanistan;