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March 11, 2010

Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee
United States Postal Service – Stamp Development
1735 North Lynn Street, Suite 5013
Arlington, Virginia 22209-6432

Dear Stamp Committee Members:

We respectfully request the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee issue a United States stamp honoring the heroism of “The Borinqueneers” of the 65th Infantry Regiment, the only all-Hispanic unit in United States Army history.

The 65th Infantry Regiment was created in 1899 by the United States Congress as a segregated unit composed primarily of Puerto Ricans with mostly continental officers. The 65th's regimental motto, “Honor and Fidelity” exemplifies its valiant and meritorious service in three wars: World I, World War II and the Korean War. The unit was nicknamed “The Borinqueneers” after “Borinquen”, the word given to Puerto Rico by its original inhabitants, the Taino Indians.

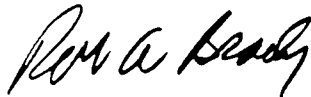
When they were finally called to the front lines in the Korean War the men of the 65th performed impressively, earning praise from General MacArthur. They performed a critical role containing the Chinese advance and supporting the United States Marines in the aftermath of the Battle of the Chosin Reservoir. Sent to every corner of the peninsula they showed outstanding resilience and a legendary fierceness as combatants even as they faced discrimination within the Army. Over the next three years the regiment participated in nine major campaigns and earned a Presidential Unit Citation, a Meritorious Unit Commendation and two Republic of Korea Unit Citations. Individual members earned ten Distinguished Service Crosses, 421 Silver Stars and 156 Bronze Stars. The regiment killed six thousand Communist soldiers and captured two thousand. More than three thousand soldiers were wounded, including six hundred killed.

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Puerto Ricans occupy a special place in the history of the United States Army. Because of the island's commonwealth status, although they are United States citizens, they don't have the right to vote in United States elections, and yet they serve in the military and can be drafted. For many of the veterans of the 65th, this paradox became an incentive to be even more patriotic, to prove themselves in battle 200%. In 1956 "The Borinqueneers" became the last segregated unit to be deactivated and became the only unit ever to be transferred from an active Army component to the Puerto Rican National Guard. The 1st Battalion, 65th Infantry Regiment (1-65th Infantry) was assigned to the 92nd Infantry Brigade and today continues its service against the global War on terrorism.

Although more than 20,000 Puerto Ricans have served courageously as Borinqueneers since World War I, their contributions and sacrifices have gone largely unnoticed. Honoring "The Borinqueneers" with a commemorative United States stamp would be a fitting tribute for these brave soldiers and serve to educate the American public about their existence and service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob A Brady". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

ROBERT A. BRADY
Member of Congress

Copy To: Borinqueneers Stamp Committee